The Christmas Number of The Bookman.

"I AM A BOOKMAN."—JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

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NOTICES.

All communications intended for the Editor must be addressed to the Editor of THE BOOKMAN, ST. PAUL'S HOUSE, WARWICK SQUARE, LONDON, E.C.4.

A preliminary letter of inquiry should be sent to the Editor before any manuscript is submitted for his consideration.

News Notes.

The eight portraits in chalk which are among our presentation plates this month were specially drawn for THE BOOKMAN, the eight subjects very kindly giving sittings for that purpose. The artist, Mr. Robert J. Swan, is as yet only at the beginning of what promises to be a brilliant career. He was a student at the Royal Academy Schools, where he obtained the medal for figure painting, the Landseer Scholarship, and the British Institution Scholarship in Painting. He has for some while been a regular exhibitor in the Royal Academy, the National Portrait Society's galleries and the International Exhibition, but the portraits in this Number are his first published work.

A new novel by W. J. Locke, "The House of Baltazar," will be published in January by Mr. John Lane.

A book to be anticipated with more than ordinary interest is the book of reminiscences that Mrs. Asquith is writing. It will be published next year by Mr. Thornton Butterworth.

"The Blower of Bubbles" (Chambers), which we review elsewhere, is a remarkable first book by a Canadian author, Mr. Arthur Beverley Baxter. He was born in Toronto, and became something of a musical prodigy, travelling about Canada and appearing as an alto soloist in a large choir at the age of ten. When he left school, instead of studying for the law as his parents had meant him to, he secured a position in a broker's office, but was put down from that for erroneously marking up on the wall the wrong Exchange quotations. Then he was placed with a piano company. and filled his leisure by writing and illustrating articles for various small publications. Also. being then nineteen, he wrote a play which was accepted and went into rehearsal but was not produced because the

Mary A. Ward

Mrs. Humphry Ward, whose new novel, "Cousin Philip," Messrs. Collins have just published.

Photo by E. O. Hoppé. **Mr. C. S. Evans,**

whose retold story o "Cinderella," illustrated by Arthur Rackham, is ublished by Mr. Heinemann.

producer went bankrupt three days before the opening night. When the war came he crossed the sea as a lieutenant in the 122nd Canadian Infantry Battalion; was afterwards transferred to the Canadian Engineers; saw service in France with the Signals of the First Canadian Division, and was invalided out in July, 1918. His stories have the war for background and atmosphere, but it is not so much the fighting as the human effects of the great upheaval that have appealed to him, its wakening and uplifting influence on national and individual character.

One of the most notable books of American war poems was "The Challenge," by Lieutenant Leonard Van Noppen, which was published here by Mr. Elkin Mathews last year. Its one hundred and twenty-six sonnets have made a large appeal to the public and been crowned with praise by many of our leading poets and critics. They range over many phases of the world-tragedy and are by turns romantic, emotional, ironic and fiercely denunciatory. At the time the book appeared Lieutenant Van Noppen was in London as assistant attaché of the U.S.S. *Melville*, flagship; he subsequently went as assistant Naval attaché to The Hague. Born in North Carolina, his father of old Dutch American descent, his mother of French stock, Lieutenant Van Noppen graduated at the North Carolina University, and was for a while a Professor at Columbia University. In those early days, over twenty years ago, he made a masterly translation from the Dutch of Von Vondel's epic-drama, "Lucifer," from which Milton drew inspiration for much that is in "Paradise Lost," and its publication gave him at once a distinguished place in American letters. But the scholastic life was not congenial to him, and he presently gave up his professorship, and avows that he is a free lance in literature henceforth. At the end of "The Challenge" there are given some striking fragments from "Armageddon: A Symphonic Drama of Evolution," a poem on which Lieutenant Van Noppen has been engaged at intervals for twenty years past, and being now released from active service he proposes to settle at the Riviera for a year or more and there bring this, his most ambitious work in poetry, to a conclusion.

Mr. C. S. Evans, whose retold story of "Cinderella," illustrated in colour and silhouette by Mr. Arthur Rackham (Heinemann), is one of the most charming of this year's Christmas books for children, has done much admirable work in literary criticism. Also, some few years ago, he published, in "Nash and Others" (Edward Arnold), a series of stories that for their delightful humour and subtle understanding of the character of the human boy were ranked by discerning critics with Kenneth Grahame's "The Golden Age"; and we understand the book will presently be reissued in a cheap edition.

Lieutenant Leonard van Noppen, U.S.A.

The death last month of Mrs. Ella Wheeler Wilcox was received with very widespread regret. She has long been the most popular of American poets, and her books, published over here by Messrs. Gay & Hancock, have almost as large a vogue in this country as in her own. She had great gifts for expressing in fluent and musical verse the natural sentiments and emotions of ordinary humanity and a homely philosophy that average persons could understand and take comfort in. Whatever else may be said of her work, the fact remains that it has certain qualities of sincerity and intelligibility that are absent from a good deal of modern verse that is much more pretentious, less read and will be sooner forgotten.

Mrs. Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

Few women novelists have a lighter touch or a keener sense of humour than Mrs. Horace Tremlett. Her latest novel, "Platonic Peter" (Hutchinson), handles a more serious problem than is usual with her, but a prevailing spirit of humour always keeps it from becoming too serious and makes a pleasant and sparkling social comedy of what might easily have turned out something more sombre. In her time Mrs. Tremlett has travelled much about the world with her husband, who is a mining engineer. She did not begin to write about her experiences till she went to Nigeria; there she wrote "The Tin Gods," and when it appeared the press notices so encouraged her that she went on writing, and has now published six novels. "I admit," she says, "that I do not take writing very seriously. My days are spent in one of the busiest publishing houses in London, and I write at odd moments, in my free evenings and during the blessed hours of

Photo by Florence Cary. **Mrs. Horace Tremlett.**

Sunday morning. If anybody is a limpet I am, for having become attached to work during the war I intend to stick to it with all the adhesive power at my command—absolutely, there is no fun like it." As for hobbies, she adds, "I have, unfortunately, only one; it is nearly six feet high, but still fluffy, and is a source of joy and terror. I

Miss May Wedderburn Cannan,

whose new book of poems, "The Splendid Days," is published by Mr. Blackwell.

simply can't understand the outcry against a family; motherhood is the only thing that makes life worth living."

Captain Rowlands Coldicott, whose "London Men in Palestine" has just been published by Mr. Edward Arnold, was educated at Durham and Oxford, and is a B.Litt. of both universities. He wrote a good deal of verse that was published in the University magazines, the *Oxford Magazine*. *Isis*, and *Granta*, and was nearly "sent down" from Durham, when an undergraduate, for a satirical comedy against the College authorities. His first book, on Dr. Walcot ("Peter Pindar"), was finished and about to be published when the war stopped it, and it still remains in MS. A few weeks after the war began, he joined the 2/21st Battalion the London Regiment, of which his father was Colonel, and incidentally wrote and assisted with the printing of *The Twoasuwere*, a magazine that had some success beyond the battalion. He went to France in 1916, and accompanied the battalion to the Macedonian Front; and, having recovered from the usual fever, was sent to Egypt. He was in command of his company at the taking of Beersheba, and gained the M.C. at the Battle of Sheira. He marched to Jerusalem and was badly wounded in hot fighting on the Mount of Olives, and has told the whole story of that campaign vividly and interestingly, from his personal standpoint, in "London Men in Palestine." Captain Coldicott has a strong realistic touch, a neat hand at anecdote and dialogue, and has interspersed his narrative with some admirable verse. While he was recovering from his wound at Jerusalem he wrote "A Ballad of Jerusalem," and this, and later a detailed account of the taking of Beersheba, appeared in the *Cornhill*. He was transferred to the Western Front in 1918; was appointed Education Officer to the Cavalry in France and moved with them through Belgium. After the Armistice he established an English library for the troops at Spa, personally selecting eighty cases of books in London and conveying them out. "I am full of enthusiasm for Londoners as fighting men," he says, "and would like to lead them again." He confesses also that he hates rules and regulations, loves the open air, and wishes he were living "in the times of Queen Elizabeth," and his book is good reading because that is the breezy, genial, gallant spirit in which it is written.

It is eight years since David Graham Phillips was shot in a New York street by a homicidal maniac, and his last book, "Susan Lenox:

Captain H. Rowlands S. Coldicott.

Her Rise and Fall," only lately published in America, was issued in England a few weeks ago by Messrs. Appleton. Years before he established his position as a novelist he came in touch with the tragic fragment of life which he made the basis of "Susan Lenox." While on a visit to Madison he saw a beautiful girl sitting disconsolate in a farm wagon alongside a country lout she had been forced to marry. She presented, he said, a picture of wistful and appealing loveliness that haunted him ever after. He had started to write "Susan Lenox" nine years before his death. "It was written and rewritten four times," says a friend of his. "When you realise that this novel contains nearly 400,000 words you have some conception of the physical task alone. Many have wondered why its publication was so long delayed. The publisher feared its frankness might imperil his magazine and delayed its serial appearance for nearly four years. When it did come out it lifted the circulation of the periodical to such a degree that for months the issues were sold out a few days after publication."

"Adventures in Marriage," a new book of short stories by Mr. Ward Muir, will be published soon after Christmas by Messrs. Simpkin, Marshall.

Mr. F. J. Randall's humorous novel, "Somebody's Luggage," published some few years ago by Mr. John Lane, has been dramatised in America and, judging by the dramatic fees the author is receiving from it, is having a very successful run.

Messrs. G. Bell & Son have nearly ready for publication a new and revised edition of "Printing: A Practical Treatise on the Art of Typography," by Charles T. Jacobi.

"Linda Condon," by Joseph Hergesheimer, author of "The Black Pennys," will be published by Mr. Heinemann early next year. Mr. Heinemann is publishing also next year "Miser's Money," a new novel by Eden Phillpotts.

THE BOOKMAN PRIZE COMPETITIONS,

November—December, 1919.

As announced last month, owing to the early date at which the Christmas BOOKMAN has to go to press, the time for sending in for these Competitions is extended to December 14th, and results will be given in our January Number.

I.—A PRIZE OF ONE GUINEA is offered for the best *original* lyric.

II.—A PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA is offered for the best quotation from English verse applicable to any review or the name of any author or book appearing in this number of THE BOOKMAN. Preference will be given to quotations of a humorous nature.

III.—A PRIZE OF THREE NEW BOOKS is offered for the best brief motto, original or selected, for the New Year.

IV.—A PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA is offered for the best review, in not more than one hundred words, of any recently published book. Competitors should give the names of Authors and Publishers at head of review.

V.—A copy of THE BOOKMAN will be sent *post free* for *twelve months* to the sender of the best suggestion for THE BOOKMAN Competitions. The Editor reserves the right to use any suggestion submitted.

THE BOOKMAN GALLERY.

STACY AUMONIER.

MOST novelists begin their careers as something else, and sooner or later become novelists on an afterthought, or by accident. And they owe more to that false start than they always recognise, for it brings them into closer acquaintance with the world of miscellaneous men and women than they would ever have gone if they had been of that type of author who is "all author," and had lived in literary circles and a world of books from the outset. Everybody knows how much Dickens owes to his early experiences in the blacking factory, as a lawyer's clerk and as a working journalist. Smollett had been to sea as a surgeon's mate and unsuccessful ashore as a physician before he found himself as a novelist. Fielding was destined for the law, and had seen much of life and mistaken himself for a dramatist, when Richardson's "Pamela" provoked him to try his hand at parody and brought him to his true vocation; while Richardson had not known he could write fiction till after he had been for thirty years a printer. Scott, Reade, Stevenson were more or less in the law before they escaped into literature; so, later, were Stanley Weyman and Anthony Hope. Hardy was an architect; H. G. Wells was in the drapery business; Trollope and Jacobs in the Post Office; Pett Ridge a railway clerk; Conrad a sailor; Conan Doyle a doctor; Arnold Bennett a lawyer's clerk; Robert Hichens a musician.

Photo by Peter Lely. **Mr. Stacy Aumonier.**

So one hopes the more of Stacy Aumonier because he began in the right way. He was not a novelist five years ago, and when he became one, as he says, "he just drifted into literature in the philandering manner

of the majority of writers." He is of Huguenot descent: his ancestors were silversmiths who came to Spitalfields after the massacre of St. Bartholomew; and nearly all his relatives have been craftsmen of some sort. But his natural bent was for acting, and before the war he had made a considerable reputation by giving character sketches—impressions of various people he had met in the streets, on buses, tubes and about the countryside. He gave them at many London theatres, in concert halls and at private houses; they were well received by the press and rapidly growing in favour with the public when the war came and set his gallery of characters tottering and falling. The public, at that time of stress and anxiety, lost interest in them. Moreover he found that certain familiar types which had been thoroughly modern when he first presented them, seemed to grow suddenly old-fashioned; in a year or two many of them were quite obsolete. Ideals, habits, customs, the whole world was changing rapidly; Thor was hammering everything into new shapes. Character itself was in the melting-pot, and Mr. Aumonier was soon swept away from whatever of his profession had not been swept away from him and plunged into divers war activities. But there was to be no glory for him. A despised B3 man, he was put to serve for nearly a year in the Army Pay Corps, and then as a chart-maker in the Ministry of National Service.

By then he had already commenced to write, and among his fairly exacting war activities he contrived to snatch odds and ends of leisure time to solace himself with his new-found joy. The first thing he wrote was a short story called "The Friends." It was rather a morbid story about two furniture salesmen who drank themselves to death. He took it to an influential literary agent who read it and said, "My dear boy, this is all very well, but what on earth am I to do with it? No one will touch such a story as this."

That was a little discouraging; nevertheless, in due course "The Friends" proved one of the most successful tales Mr. Aumonier has written. It was published in the *English Review*; in the *Century Magazine*, in New York; and later in book form with two other of his stories. The press crowned it with praise; by the votes of the *Boston Transcript* readers it was placed as one of the five best short stories of its year, and a clergyman in Buffalo preached about it. A year later the *Spectator* called attention to it in a two and a half column notice, and described it as one of the best English short stories they had ever read.

In his first novel, "Olga Bardel," Mr. Aumonier dealt with the life of a musician, and as his wife, Miss Gertrude Peppercorn, is a well known pianist, a good many people jumped to the conclusion that she was the original of Olga; but as a fact the two are not at all alike. He admits that, of course, in portraying the temperament and telling the history of Olga Bardel he was indebted to his wife in many ways, but it was more that she helped him to an intimate appreciation of music and musical life, and the atmosphere of music and musicians which surrounded them in their London home. That musical genius which wholly absorbs its possessor and appears at times so inexplicable and so uncrushable under adverse conditions has always intrigued him; but he has never founded a character on any definite person. "I cannot understand anyone doing so," he says. "It seems to me it would knock all the fun of creation out of one's work and be as different, in point of art, as a photograph is from a water-colour drawing."

His second novel, "Just Outside," was again a novel of character. Each of his three novels have been that rather than novels of plot, for when he came to write stories he was only developing another phase of that natural aptitude which led him to impersonate on the stage the people he had met in his everyday experiences. "Just Outside" is the life-story of a temperamental youth, Arthur Gaffyn, who is always just outside the normal conception of a social order. He is one of a great many, and the war has not diminished their number. In his early days Mr. Aumonier was a decorative draughtsman, and this novel offered him an opportunity of painting many impressions of a draughtsman's life, and of the characters and types of the semi-Bohemian worlds of Paris and London at that time.

"The Querrils," his third book, published by Messrs. Methuen a few weeks ago, is a more ambitious effort than either of the other two. Essentially a character novel, it studies the interplay of character in a whole family, and consequently is more impersonal, less autobiographical than its predecessors. The Querrils are the sort of people everybody knows—very charming people, comfortably off, well educated, sentimental, excessively kind and unselfish, with many attractive and lovable traits. Withal, they are self-centred—they live in a world of their own, wrapped up in each other and their family interests. Nothing seems to trouble them, but beneath this placid exterior old currents of individual feeling and tendency are always in movement, and Mr. Aumonier sets himself to trace the surprising results that may accrue from this position of detachment, when its foundations are suddenly undermined by new and drastic circumstances. External dangers may prove illusory; the dormant internal ones, once roused into action, are irresistible. Outside events intrude forcefully upon their settled complacencies; they are not prepared for such an intrusion, and the thoughts and habits of a lifetime are broken up and turned into strange channels. The problem of this interference with long established ways and its effect upon mind and character is the main theme of the story.

In addition to his books Mr. Aumonier has written about thirty short stories which have been published both here and in America. The American public and publishers have been particularly appreciative of his work. Most of his fiction has an English setting, but he has travelled a good deal in Italy, Spain, France, Germany, Holland, as well as in America and Canada.

Latterly, Mr. Aumonier has been resuming his character sketches on the stage, but you may take it that henceforth he will remain above everything else a novelist. He has made remarkable progress in the three or four years since he began writing; he has imagination, a sense of style, and subtle skill in characterisation; and, the first thing needful in the making of a novelist, he knows how to tell a story. Moreover, his manner of telling it is distinctively his own, though he has said, "I owe much to the personal sympathy and encouragement of Mr. John Galsworthy, and not a little to the inspiration of his work."

THE READER.

THE YOUNGER NOVELISTS.

By R. Ellis Roberts.

I.

WHAT is to happen to the novel? It is a question which has often occurred to me as I have considered the number and the competence of the younger novelists. Many of them are content to be story-tellers. They have not, it appears, much curiosity about the form which they are using, and they prefer to go on producing fiction which does not differ in essentials from the old tales of old bards and *shanachies*. It is true that in the older English novelists we can already perceive the germs of the distinctive varieties of fiction: Richardson, Fielding, Bunyan and Defoe are not more alike or more unlike than James, Kipling, Mark Rutherford and George Moore: but the novel as a separate art-form really begins with Jane Austen—not with Flaubert—and its practitioners are still very few: for to write a novel as Jane Austen wrote one means that the novelist must be as sensitive to his specific forms as the sonnet-writer is to the form of the sonnet, and that sensitiveness is a very unusual quality.

For convenience I shall make a rough division of the younger novelists into five groups—the Romantics, who pursue, with a difference, that tradition to which the story is more important than the characters; the "straight" novelists, mostly followers of Thackeray, of Dickens, of Wells, to whom the novel is an instrument which can be touched to all kinds of ends, and becomes in turn essay, sermon, rhapsody or tract; a group whom I hesitate to dub Realist, who follow Flaubert and George Moore; the definite Innovators, who are more concerned with the form of their art than with anything else, disciples these, of Henry James; and a little band for whom the novel is something fantastic, or satirical, or simply humorous. These divisions are not at all watertight. In particular the line between the second and third is extremely faint. For instance Mr. Beresford sometimes follows Mr. Wells into a country which is hardly the region of the novel proper at all: and he often writes tales which are excellent examples of the French naturalist school. It has always been a characteristic of English novelists and of the English novel, that not only does an author at times adopt what seems quite a new style, but also in one work he will exhibit tendencies which are really contradictory and destructive of each other.

Photo by E. O Hoppé. **Mr. Compton Mackenzie.**

II.

Of the romantics Mr. Compton Mackenzie is certainly the most distinguished. Beginning with a *bravura* piece of considerable accomplishment, but not, save in the richness of his brocade, more remarkable than the work of the Castles, he speedily settled down to the composition of resolutely romantic accounts of life. His interest in a dirty pond is purely confined to the glitter made by the scum, if you turn the right light on it: and all his fountains of fancy have coloured lights at the back of them. Life in his books is like life in a great exhibition, and he is the Kiralfy of the younger novelists. If you go to the show in the right mood, everything will amaze, even the joy-wheel. Only once has he tried more considered things, in "Guy and Pauline." It is by far his best book, and its acute depression is a natural reaction from the glitter of the others. Mr. McKenna is more of a modernist than is Mr. Mackenzie. His early essays in fiction, with their strong recollections of E. F. Benson and Anthony Hope, displayed the talent of a conversationalist rather than the gift of a story-teller. But he is a romantic conversationalist. Life is never as tired as the epigrams about it; and in actual existence even debutantes are sometimes silent, and even undergraduates are dull. Mr. McKenna makes a mistake in his later books of dragging in actuality. He never had Mr. Mackenzie's astonishing virtuosity, his wonderful sense of precision: and his efforts to combine a study of a minx with the great events of Europe is a most lamentable affair. Two pages of "Vanity Fair" after "Sonia Married" should convince the most

stubborn admirer of our own age that in some things we are a long way behind Thackeray.

In spite of a tendency to naturalism in method, I must class both Mr. Walpole and Mr. MacGill among the romantics. The latter is more reminiscent of Hugo than of any English novelist; he has much of the French master's hatred of injustice, and much of his habit of shouting the truth at his readers. His work is particularly valuable as giving one an Ireland far removed from the farces of George A. Birmingham or the comedy of Mrs. Conyers or of Somerville and Ross. He is in the true succession of Irish novelists, such as Michael Banim and Will Carleton, and has, like them, a kinship with the peasantry and with the life of the fields. Mr. Walpole, in spite of his excursion into Russia, in spite of "Mr. Perrin and Mr. Traill," is at heart romantic. He is not altogether free from sentimentality: his belief in the Duchess of Wrexe seems to me like the odd superstition which surrounded Mr. Gladstone. Great as Gladstone was there are people who tell you that he was greatest when he looked at an opponent in anger, that his eyes dilated, and the opponent shrivelled away. Apart from the fact that this was not always true—that Parnell and Chamberlain and Labouchere never wilted before that eagle glance, it is plain that to respect it was gross cowardice: it was to respect not the man, but a physical accident—it was to allow yourself to be bullied. Mr. Walpole allows himself to be bullied. He is over-impressed with the labels of things; he does not like taking life directly and imaginatively, but desires veils and subterfuges. Every time he is tempted to think of Russia I wish he would say to himself, firmly, *Coelum non animum mutant qui trans mare currunt.* That line condemns the romantic heresy which consists in believing that there is something in our human lives more important than the mood of man; that adventure, or courage, or valour, or loving-kindness are other than attributes of the soul, and that knight-errantry is a profession instead of a vocation. There is one author, not perhaps strictly within my purview, who provides an antidote for the heresy—C. E. Lawrence. In all his books, but especially in the last two—"Youth Went Riding" and "Such Stuff as Dreams"—you have that note of imaginative romance which knows how to abandon the picturesque and heroic and makes beauty out of the simple things of everyday, not by altering them or lying about them or by sentimentalising over them, but by seeing the love in the people, by believing in the Dominical words: "Lift the stone and ye shall find me: Cleave the wood, and there am I."

Photo by E. O. Hoppé.

Mr. Hugh Walpole.

III.

I do not think Mr. Wells has a greater admirer than myself; but it is impossible not to deplore his influence on the younger men. That there are authors who would never have written fiction at all, others who would have written quite differently, and some who would write much better were it not for Mr. Wells is, I believe, easily demonstrable. Mr. W. L. George, for instance, has none of the specific qualities of a novelist: he is a sociologist, and his one good novel, "The City of Light," is an essay on a very entrancing side of French family life. Mr. Beresford, a born novelist, has gone out of his way to write pseudo-scientific tales; and we owe to Mr. Wells the only bad book the late Stephen Reynolds ever wrote. Mr. St. John Ervine, who started with a novel which showed promise as high as that displayed by any author in my list, and an individual genius of a disciplined kind, has in "Changing Winds" allowed himself to be influenced too much by the later Wells tradition. As for the authors who would never have written at all but for Mr. Wells, let silence surround them. They have their reward. It is, however, an enormous tribute both to Mr. Wells's vitality and his astonishing opportuneness to his age that he should have so many disciples, while Mr. Conrad, Mr. Hardy, Mr. Henry James, Mr. Kipling, Mrs. Wharton and Mr. George Moore have so few. Were it not for Mr. Wells, we should not have had as they were written "Old Mole," or "Housemates," "A Lady and Her Husband," or "The Processionals," or "Pantomime," or "Consequences." It is not that any of these books could be mistaken for a novel by Mr. Wells: their authors have too keen individualities for that; but for all of them the writings of Mr. Wells are part of their emotional experience. They have read other novelists, possibly admire other novelists more; but Mr. Wells is life talking to them, and they've had to absorb him, to do something with him, as people must do with any part of their lives, whether it be pleasant or unpleasant.

Of this group the most talented is Mr. Cannan, just as the most competent is Mr. Beresford. Mr. Cannan writes too much, and at times in execrable taste. In his later books he has suppressed the sardonic humour which made "Old Mole" in parts as good reading as

R.J. SWAN, 1919.

something by Samuel Butler; but his novels, especially "Mendel," display a mental ferocity, unamiable, if you like, but of rare quality. He dislikes life and a great many people; he is emotionally awkward, and has the reticence not of a child, but of a youth who mistakes candour for truth. One is still uncertain whether his work will come to anything, or whether his black humour will destroy him and it: but one can never read him without finding something to hold one's attention and a few passages which open windows to beauty, of an unquiet and anxious kind. Mr. Beresford stands at the other pole. He is almost too self-possessed. He can refine emotion until it becomes a fidget. There is something oddly ecclesiastical in his temperament, something of the hair-splitting that one associates with over-definition. Yet he can portray, as in "Housemates" and "The House in Demetrius Road," passion at white-heat, passion informing the whole life. But I never conquer the sensation that he is a man who has learnt to overcome a stammer; and so speaks with a precision and a deliberateness which give to his works a certain air of artificiality.

There is a group of younger men—Mr. Ivor Brown, Mr. Bohun Lynch, Mr. Orlo Williams and Mr. John Palmer, Mr. Arnold Lunn and Mr. Alec Waugh, about whose talents judgment must be suspended. I do not feel that any of them, save perhaps Mr. Lynch and Mr. Palmer, are inevitable novelists: that the story is their natural medium. They are all preoccupied with ideas rather than with persons, and have not enough of that stereoscopic sense which is essential to the novelist. It is this sense which made Mr. Ervine's first novel—"Mrs. Martin's Man"—so remarkable. It shared with Miss Rebecca West's "Return of the Soldier" the honour of being a first novel with no touch of obvious

Mr. W. L. George.

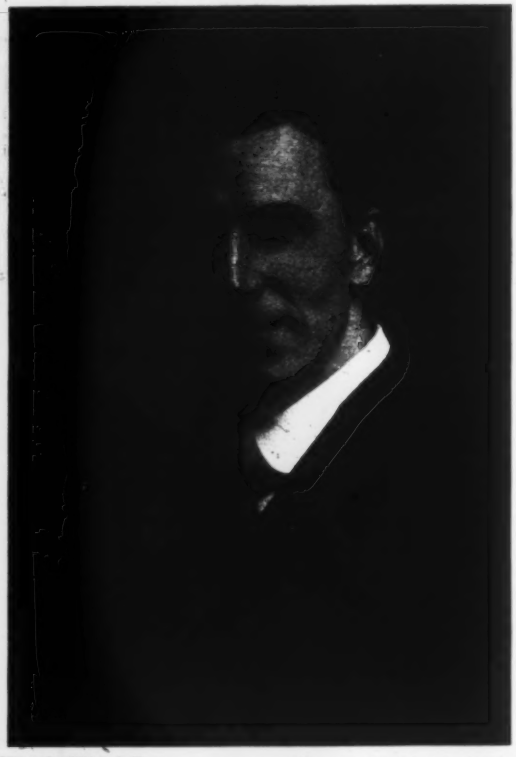
Photo by Lena Connell. **Mr. St. John Ervine.**

autobiography about it. It displayed a vivid sense of human relationship, a really keen mind and a curiosity which, if rather over intellectual, was still genuine and objective. Nothing is more tiresome than to read novel after novel in which the author's gaze is turned selfwards instead of outwards, in which the world of other people is used but as a background for the author's fancies and imaginations. Yet in "Changing Winds" Mr. Ervine betrayed his preoccupations: and until he has published another novel one must leave him in doubt whether the promise of that first book is to be fulfilled, and whether he will, as that book suggested, take his place among our third group of objective novelists of whom Mr. Frank Swinnerton is definitely chief.

IV.

As I have said, divisions three and four glide into one another. Mr. Beresford belongs to this group by virtue of "God's Counterpoint," just as he belongs to the last group by virtue of the "Jacob Stahl" trilogy. If I may return to Mr. Wells, I should say that the chief difference between, say, Mr. Swinnerton and Mr. Ervine, is that the former has assimilated all of Wells that can be of use to him, while the latter has bolted his Wells whole. It is difficult, indeed, to say what influences have gone to the making of such perfect books as "Nocturne" and "September." The method of Mr. Charles Marriott is as evident in Mr. Swinnerton's work as the method of Mr. E. M. Forster is in Miss Meynell's; but one is not at all certain whether Mr. Swinnerton would not have discovered the method had Mr. Marriott never written a line. All Mr. Swinnerton's work has a freshness and an individuality which

make one exclaim not—"O this is a bit of Gissing—or that's Marriott—or isn't that like Henry James!"—but—"So he does it that way, too." His claim may be pegged out on the same gold-field, but he digs his own ore. As I look through my list of over forty names—and I am ignoring a good many—I realise how rare that is. You have a good deal of nearly first-rate work, and a good deal of second-hand: to find something at once first-rate and first-hand is a pleasure no reviewer can forget. I feel it—though not quite so sharply as about Mr. Swinnerton—about six of my authors: all very different, but all with that strong turn of personality which makes one repeat the old Whitman tag, "Who touches this book touches a man." Miss Kaye-Smith, Mrs. Lynd, Mrs. Woolf, Miss Crosbie, Mr. Macfarlane and Miss Hope Mirrlees—all of



[Photo by Elliott & Fry. **Mr. J. D. Beresford.**

these write out of experience and memory, not out of memory and hope: they have pondered rather than wondered, forced themselves to think, not allowed themselves to dream. Of the six Miss Kaye-Smith has written the longest: I hesitated whether I should not put her on a par with Mr. Swinnerton as an original talent; but her debt to Hardy is at times a little evident, and at times she challenges comparison with Mrs. Dudeney. Her talent is best shown in "A Challenge to Sirius" and "Tamarisk Town": in the former the account of the American Civil War is an extraordinary feat of historical reconstruction, and in the latter the picture of Monypenny who slays love for ambition seem to me worthy to be a pendant to Ibsen's portrait of John Gabriel Borkman. Miss Crosbie and Mr. Macfarlane are novelists of "humours"—they either give their people a definite kink or look at them from an odd angle. Their work gives one the pleasure which is given by a tart apple—a keen, acid tang. Miss Mirrlees has only just published her first novel—"Madeleine." It is a book which puts her immediately among the more important of the younger novelists. Whether as a study of spiritual and mental *malaise* or as a reconstruction of a society so foreign as the Paris of de Scudéry's time, "Madeleine" is a remarkable book. As a first novel it challenges our hope as definitely as did Mrs. Lynd's "The Chorus," that bright-eyed, keen-witted exploration of social inadequacy. Mrs. Woolf, who has just issued her second book, seems with it to be ready to step into that gap which has never been filled since the death of Mrs. Gaskell. "The Voyage Out," her first novel, was one of the most dismal pieces of comedy I have ever read: one had no doubts as to Mrs. Woolf's cleverness, but one wondered to what end she would use it. If "Night and Day" be the answer, it is a very cheerful one. It reminds me again and again of Mrs. Gaskell's "Sylvia's Lovers," granted the necessary change in manners and period: Mrs. Woolf has all Mrs. Gaskell's sly, comfortable humour, and also her sedate, leisurely attitude.

Space is forcing me to neglect many novelists who deserve more detailed attention. There is Mr. Brett Young, whose last novel, "The Young Physician," shows him in a transitional mood, but still writing most admirable English; Mrs. Mordaunt, Miss Delafield and Miss Hamilton—three women who have displayed a sense of humour which makes their fiction a lively commentary on modern manners: there is Miss Stern, who reads, I think, better than she writes; and Mr. A. P. Herbert, whose war novel was one of the few genuine studies in soldier psychology. In George Stevenson, who surely must be added to the list of women who have chosen "George" as their pseudonym, we have an author whose careful detail, quiet humour, and air of leisured comment reminds one of Trollope. And with Mr. M. T. H. Sadler, whose sense of construction is so far superior to his sense of character, one passes naturally to the small group for whom construction and innovation, either of method or subject, seems to be more important than either incident or psychology.

V.

I hope no one will think that I believe Mr. Swinnerton or Mr. Beresford, Miss Kaye-Smith or Mr. Brett Young ignore construction. Mr. Swinnerton, I believe, knows as much about the making of a novel as any of the young people in this group; but he is not preoccupied with it. In a story like "Nocturne"—the characters, the incidents, the construction all claim equal admiration: in the authors I am going to consider one's first thought is not with their books as wholes; the craft of construction has been too strong for the art of the book. Mr. D. H. Lawrence, Miss Sidgwick, Miss Meynell, Miss Romer Wilson, Miss Dorothy Richardson, Mr. James Joyce and Mr. Wyndham Lewis are all authors whom I would assign to this group. About some I hesitated. Mr. Lawrence belongs to it not so much by virtue of any definite experiments—though he has made innovations in the short story which lies outside the scope of this paper—but by virtue of a certain attitude. His novels are the works not of a man with

a new method, but of a man who is looking for one. He sometimes writes like his imitators, sometimes like a parody, and sometimes with a sultry splendour which makes passages of "The White Peacock" and "Sons and Lovers" magnificently solitary in modern fiction. Mr. Lawrence has published no novel since "The Rainbow," though I believe he has completed at least one: his genius is one which must not be allowed to be silent, and though he may turn for a time to the drama, I believe he will come back to the novel, and give us some book, purged of the folly and offence which spoil so much of his early work. Miss Sidgwick and Miss Meynell provide a remarkable contrast. Miss Sidgwick is, I suppose, the most competent woman novelist of her period. She enjoys her virtuosity so much that she sometimes forgets its object: after all one wants a novel, and Miss Sidgwick is capable of forgetting her story in her excitement at telling it you as clearly as possible. In her latest books I am ashamed to say I find a resemblance to those people who know their anecdotes so well that they cannot believe the point has to be stated: it has been so long a part of their mental make-up that they think the audience must know it. Miss Meynell never makes this mistake. She is astonished afresh at each new book of hers, at each new person she meets and introduces to us. She writes emotionally when Miss Sidgwick writes intellectually—and though each will use insinuation rather than statement—there is a world of difference between an insinuated syllogism and an insinuated tear. Miss Sidgwick's method is at times obscure, but her thought is clear: Miss Meynell's method is clear, but her thought is confused. Her people move in a world where judgment is thought abrupt and decision rather vulgar, and the lines between "might" and "might not" are fanciful lines. Miss Romer Wilson's "Martin Schuler" is one of the few successful efforts to present a genius. Miss Wilson's method is not unlike that of M. Jules

Photo by W. G. Parker. **Mr. D. H. Lawrence.**

Photo by E. O. Hoppé. **Miss Rebecca West.**

Romaine—true, she could not be called *unanimiste*, but she has that respect for the crowd, for something in the group which feeds and sustains the individual. I believe this theory to be as much of a fallacy as Mr. Hardy's view of fate; but, like that, it can produce fine art, and Miss Wilson is a novelist who may be expected to excel.

I am left with three definite innovators. I am a heretic towards Miss Richardson. I can see the power in her work and recognise her industry, her energy and her astonishing visual sense: but I do not see that she gains anything from the odd, staccato, "direct action" method of "Pointed Roofs" and "The Tunnel." The sense of actuality is no greater than that conveyed by Tolstoy or George Moore or Flaubert: and I believe that most people who admire the books would have admired them had they been written in a more ordinary way. Towards Mr. James Joyce and Mr. Wyndham Lewis I feel differently. Whether you like or dislike "Tarr" and "The Portrait of an Artist," it is impossible to deny that they do produce a new effect in literature—an effect not dissimilar to the effect of some of the new methods in painting. That the method of "Tarr"—with its brutality, its angry scorn—has any future, I should not like to say: but it has a quality as distinct and forcible as the method, now familiar, used by Mr. Kipling in his early short stories.

VI.

There remains a small group of novelists whom I could not include even in these rough-and ready classifications. Miss Rose Macaulay, it is true, could be adjusted into the second group; but she has a little imp which forbids me from setting her there. That imp, whether it move her to the satire of tears as in "Non-Combatants," or the satire of laughter as in "What Not," makes her one of the fairy-struck group. The most notable of them are Mr. James Stephens and Miss Stella Benson—both changelings, both aware of

the tricksiness in human nature. This fairy-trick has nothing in common with Mr. Blackwood's rather solemn pantheism. That it does perhaps derive a little from Mr. E. M. Forster, who wrote the "Celestial Omnibus," may be suspected, but it is more spontaneous than Mr. Forster's humour. Mr. Stephens and Miss Benson welcome a saint or an angel as warmly as an elf, a faun or a fairy: Mr. Forster would always give the angel a brief discourse on the theological position before allowing him to play.

Then quite alone stand two books—"South Wind," by Norman Douglas, and "The Young Visiters," by Daisy Ashford. "South Wind" owes nothing to anyone save, perhaps, Peacock. It is full of that fine paganism which yet has an acid touch to it—like the resinous taste in Greek wine: and "The Young Visiters" has taken its place beside that small body of literature which we have so long thought unique, the remains of Marjorie Fleming.

Photo by Gyde, Aberystwyth. **Miss R. Macaulay.**

I have deliberately excluded from this survey writers of the short story, and all American and Colonial authors. To include the latter would have extended the essay far too much, and a proper consideration of the short story can be made more conveniently apart from criticism of the novel. I cannot hope that, even so, this record can be judged complete by every one. Many book-lovers would no doubt include authors that I have not mentioned, and some might wish to omit some of my names. But taking only these authors, the great majority of whom have earned their fame since 1910, no one can fail to be struck by the amazing degree and variety of talent displayed. There may be among them no Conrad, no Hardy, no Wells: but in the works of these forty-odd novelists English literature has a body of inspirative work which must make us hopeful for the future. There may reasonably be doubts as to the precise form of the fiction of the future; there can be none that, in these hands, the fiction of the century may be as great and as representative as the fiction of the nineteenth.

THE YOUNGER POETS.

BY WILFRID L. RANDELL.

IN all ages the poet has been the representative of his country's highest level in the sphere of art, for to him is assigned just that crowning gift of vision, that mysterious inward force, and that especially flexible mode of expression, which make not only for beauty but for permanence and universality. Unlike the painter and musician, whose finest revelations may often be incomprehensible to uncultured minds, he has the power of appealing to scholar and clown, and his simplest lyric may ring most clearly with unmistakable truth and passion.

It would be pleasant to consider for a moment a few definitions of poetry placed on record by philosophers, critics, and poets themselves; but my space will not allow digressions. Stammering and unsatisfactory most of them are, of necessity; it is as though one should strive to explain the witchery of a rosy sunset-cloud by talk of suspended moisture and refracted light, or to analyse the thrill of a violin's sweetness by discussing resonance and the properties of stretched strings. There are sounds, sights, feelings which defy definition—and often the poet, intolerant of logic and precision, comes nearest to capturing them. On these lines a passable aphorism might be framed: Poetry is the endeavour to express in language the inexpressible. For ever doomed therefore to partial failure, in its partial success lies the most entrancing pleasure, since those same sounds, sights and feelings compel us to silence or faltering words at the hours of life that are most terrible, most glorious, most holy.

The "restless analyst," then, is out of place, it seems, in the world of poetry, unless he confines himself to such technical matters as iambs, spondees, trochees, dactyls, cæsuras, and the rest of the useful, outlandish crew. Let us agree that the true poem brings its own magic, attests its own confident authority to the title. We give unquestioning homage to the rushing choruses of "Atalanta," to the majestic harmonies of "Lycidas" and "Thyrsis," to the tender music of "Love in the Valley," to the ornate stanzas of "The Hound of Heaven," to a hundred other splendours, content with their stateliness, their luxury of sound, their simplicity, their inevitable rightness. But these are of the past; what of the present?

R. J. SWAN,

We have been concerned hitherto with the "real right thing," not with correct blank-verse platitudes, or the rhyming efforts of lovers with literary aspirations, sincere though they may be. Respect is always due to sincerity, but the tribute need not take the form of a laurel crown. One critic has said that "Sincerity and Conscience, the two angels that bring to the poet the wonders of the poetic dream, bring him also the deepest, truest delights of form." Very pretty indeed; yet it is possible to be perfectly sincere and conscientious and to have no notion of form; likewise to be sincere, conscientious and true to form, and to write most futile verse. Even a Wordsworth can collapse in unfortunate moments; even Tennyson "waited for the train at Coventry." But let us glance at a few modern poets, bearing in mind the accepted, honoured past. I shall not attempt to answer that dangerous question: When does a poet pass from the younger generation? save to say that age and youth are relative matters, not to be fixed by grey hairs or smooth faces. That acknowledged poet, John Masefield, comes well within the range of my theme, though possibly he looks upon younger poets with the indulgence of maturity. The author of "The Everlasting Mercy," "The Daffodil Fields" and "The Widow in the Bye Street" bore aloft a torch which for a while irradiated him with an exceeding brightness, but which in hours of sober contemplation is seen to burn with a somewhat smoky flame. It may not be undesirable that such work should attain a measure of popularity, for it had impressive, even beautiful, interludes, and the public attention was directed with astonishing persistence towards poetry. So much, then, to the good. The point to be observed (since popularity is no test of value) is that these lengthy narrative-stanzas do not satisfy an urgent requisite: a poem must be the highest form of what it endeavours to express. It will not pass into the sphere of the immortals if its theme could have been better treated in prose; and that is precisely where Masefield failed. These prizefights, these psychic, sentimental and religious adventures, demanded no rhyme, no adornment of poetic rhythms—they would have been best related in the form of the short story, and as such would be admirably clothed in their finest artistic garment—artistic, yet natural. They were assisted by the ingenious use of contrast. As an ordinary rose exhibited in a coal-shed would appear a bloom of surprising beauty, so the passages of moderate poetic value, placed in close proximity to stanzas of commonplace language, became unnaturally enhanced; therefore in essence the poems are sensational. It takes a very great artist to raise a rhymed story above the level of mere verse, to intensify it to epic force, and the question whether the work could be accomplished more effectively in prose forms a very fair test. It is impossible to conceive Meredith's "Modern Love" humiliated thus, or Keats's "Eve of St. Agnes," or Rossetti's "Jenny"; they are one with their form, and inseparable from it. And so are Masefield's inimitable "Ballads and Poems," a copy of which is among my treasures. Here matter, manner and spirit are a trinity; here are sonnets with lines that haunt the memory; here are tiny lyrics crystal clear without a flaw, and rhythms that "swing" like the soft, stately roll of a ship in a waveless ground-swell. These are the things that "place" John Masefield, not the narrative-rhymes by which he leaped to popular acclaim.

The danger of new departures in any sphere of art is that they beget groups of imitators whose members echo, in a descending scale of values, any work that happens to have caught their attention. We see this in the fraternity of "futurists," "cubists," and other later splits from the body poetic, who present to the critical eye little more than an amusing, evanescent aspect of youth with energy to spend—clever youth, that will learn better later on. We demand no slavish obedience to convention, for blind conformity means retrogression and decay; but rebellion that throws aside wisdom laboriously gathered by innumerable predecessors bespeaks a disintegrating tendency. The beginner and the weakling need a "credo!" as an influence making for restraint and stability; to cast it aside as old-fashioned, to pose as prophets of new artistic modes, to shout self-praise—these things that seem to "the less practised eye of sanguine youth" so gloriously independent are signs of weakness, not of strength.

That this contempt for all established ideas has spread to the realm of poesy is not surprising. There have always been and always will be people who, finding themselves incapable of gaining an audience by the legitimate methods of ability and application to universal principles, strive for the fleeting fame that follows eccentricity and extravagance. How lightly is the eternal compact between the poet and high heaven shattered by these rebels! They regard their compositions as "works of art"—we have their word for it. "The questions to be asked concerning any work of art," said one famous critic, "are simply these: Is that which is here embodied really permanent, universal and elemental? and is the concrete form embodying it really beautiful—acknowledged as beautiful by the soul

Photo by Sherril Schell. **Mr. Wilfrid Wilson Gibson.**

of man in its highest moods? Any other question is an impertinence." Applying such a test, what is left of most of these efforts?

It may be said that such vagaries are negligible, that they have nothing to do with poetry and may be safely ignored. They have, it is true, no lasting value, but they serve as an illustration of the tendency that is creeping insidiously through many branches of art to throw together words, or colours, or sounds in any order or disorder, and to regard the result as mysteriously inspired. This was too freely indulged by the little group whose "Wheels" revolved rather eccentrically a short time ago. From them I should select Osbert Sitwell for special distinction; he is a poet; he is feeling his way to full expression, and his striving for originality is a good sign, though it may be pointed out that to follow the conventions does not necessarily mean tedium or poverty of ideas or lack of beauty. His new volume, "Argonaut and Juggernaut," seems to indicate that the great music of great poetry is coming to him; it is a marked stage on the journey. His mastery of rhymed and unrhymed verse, regular or irregular in construction, is admirable. There is a cynical note in many of the poems, but it is controlled nearly always by (I think) the spirit of true poetry which prevents extremes and makes for restrained expression even of the most urgent emotions. In the "Second Cycle" of "Wheels," a remarkable poem by Arnold James, entitled "Till the Morn Break," made me wish to read more from the same hand.

Photo by E. O. Hoppé.

Mr. Osbert Sitwell.

Mr. Wilfrid Gibson, whose little volumes won him notice as an exponent of real life—life "down to the bare bones," as the unpleasant phrase goes—sees farther than most of the younger men who try to infuse their own conception of originality into the old and ever-beautiful tradition; yet we read his careful pages with the impression of watching a rather laboriously acted drama. The "realist," if in earnest, if true to his convictions, has to "face the music" almost in a literal sense. He has either to drag the music in, to be a rhyming painter and decorator of his own too severe surfaces, or he must sacrifice so much possible beauty in his desire to "present the facts of life." Now, it is evident that the older, greater poets suffered under no such deadening handicap. They were not principally concerned with the presentation of facts; to them such facts as they might take were but as the chrysalis, from which should rise a new and transformed creation; derived and yet different; soaring, singing, yet within reach of the charmed eye and ear of the beholder. Mr. John Drinkwater knows this, and though his cool, critical spirit seems to hold him back from highly emotional work, we may be grateful for his gift of restraint—it is too rare nowadays. His best is to be found in "Poems, 1908–1914," selected by the author from his previous books. Some few of the favourites are here slightly retouched, and one of them, "June Dance," is quite changed—which raises the question of the legitimacy of rewriting in after days a poem which presumably recorded a certain mood; down this tempting by-way I must not wander. Since then, Drinkwater has given us "Pawns," three wonderful little "poetic plays" extraordinary in their mastery of a difficult medium. The curiously-named "X = O: A Night of the Trojan War" brings home to the reader the fact that war between nations is absurd—that soldiers on opposed fronts have no personal quarrel; it is a gleaming little play in which common sense and beauty are most unusually combined. It is impossible to doubt that Mr. Drinkwater will do work that will bring permanent fame within the next few years, if (and I think this is indispensable) he will avoid writing facile rhymes suggested by melodious or personally-loved place-names and will allow, occasionally, the banked-up fire of his poetic passion to burn to white-heat.

Among the war-poets Theodore Maynard—who, if he is not careful, will produce too much and be spoiled by topical sonnets—showed in "Drums of Defeat" how greatly the ballad-spirit appealed to him; and in "Folly," a more recent volume, he has a "Canterbury Tale" that is really Chaucerian, a triumph in its way, imitative though it is compelled to be. And Robert Graves in "Fairies and Fusiliers" is musical and sincere; his work is exceedingly pleasing because of its ease and fine simplicity. In "Twenty-six Poems," Cecil Roberts reaches a high level of music without quite satisfying us as to technique. Gilbert Frankau, whose sense of rhythm was simply tremendous in that *tour-de-force*, "How Rifleman Brown Came to Valhalla"—which appeared in a war-collection entitled "The City of Fear"—followed up his deserved success by "The Judgment of Valhalla," and the two books are a striking pair. He looks at war boldly, strips it of the false quantity of "glory" (admitting the glory of thousands of brave and gallant deeds), and with consummate skill gives in rhymed and unrhymed verse the real grisly demon of battle. Nor has Patrick MacGill any illusions in his "Soldier Songs," though, like the others, he grants the necessity of the terrible work once it had begun. His book is a curious mixture of the gently lyrical and the frankly colloquial, the verse that takes you back to the birds and lanes of the Old Country:

"There's a little brown bird in the spinney,
With a little gold cap on his head,"

and the verse that bumps rather uncomfortably:

"We're goin' easy now a bit, all dressed in blighty blue;
We've 'eld the trenches eighteen months and copped some packets too";

but the fact emerges, slightly though the second style appeals to us, that MacGill is a true poet, knowing well how to manage the technical side of his art and possessing the gift of a kind of stamped and finished clearness that is rare in days of a tendency to woolly impressionism.

Clearness is a notable characteristic of two poets of an earlier school whose work must at least be mentioned here, familiar and established though it is—Mr. Laurence Binyon and Mr. Walter de la Mare. Calm, clear, and accurate as ever, Mr. Binyon allowed more emotion to appear in his recent work than in the finely chiselled and cold verses he used to write; while Mr. de la Mare seems scarcely to change. Always he instils a fairy-like, ethereal charm into his poems, and the two last I have seen, one in the *London Mercury* and one in the *Westminster Gazette*, have the same ascent into a land of faery where children play and grown-up folk only enter by special permission. Mr. de la Mare has the key, and—let us thank him—takes us in with him whenever he will.

How absolutely modern a man can be without ruining loveliness and insulting the spirit of poesy is shown by two of our younger poets whom I, for one, delight to honour: Mr. J. C. Squire and Mr. Harold Monro. They both avoid prettiness like the plague; they can both write of ordinary things with transforming gift; and probably neither of them has written a bad poem in his

Mr. Theodore Maynard.

Photo by E. O. Hoppé. **Mr. Harold Monro.**

life. As parodist, Mr. Squire can hold his own with Max Beerbohm—what higher praise is possible?—and is not so aloof from our everyday world; but it is as poet that he sets me wondering where he will eventually "land." Half-way up Olympus already, he is still young, thank Heaven. And though I am avoiding the conventional method of quotations as far as may be, I must allow myself the luxury of giving Squire's "Behind the Lines"—which, I believe, appeared first in that gallery of the younger poets' work, "To-Day":

"The wind of evening cried along the darkened trees,
Along the darkened trees heavy with ancient pain;
Heavy with ancient pain from faded centuries.
From faded centuries? O foolish thought and vain!

"O foolish thought and vain, to think the wind could know,
To think the wind could know the griefs of men who died,
The griefs of men who died and mouldered long ago—
'And mouldered long ago,' the wind of evening cried."

Cleverness and beauty here triumphantly blend, and somehow the thrill comes afresh every time I read this little circlet of verse. You will pardon me for profanely exclaiming, "What about 'Wheels' after that?"

In a paper-covered booklet entitled "Twenty-Three New Poems by Contemporary Poets" that recently fluttered from the Poetry Bookshop, Mr. Monro had a striking irregular exercise called "Underworld," full of thought and idea as his work invariably is; I hope that as time goes on he will not omit the rhythm and music which to me form a great part of poetry, and which our past exemplars did not disdain. Mr. Ralph Hodgson, whose two collections of poetry secure him among the elect, never forgets the old traditions; although his form is inseparable from his vision, he never adventures the outlandish. And he has the most happy gift of humour, which some of our younger poets either do

XUM

without or torture into grotesques of little value save as curiosities. Separating these last three men from the others, I should say that they possess a gift of irony, variously developed, but not strained in use to scornful or unworthy ends; it is that which gives the point and sting to some of their poems—the best poems, in my judgment, that are being written at this time. The late George Wyndham said: "To be liquid and dynamic, to be a stream, a lovely stream, *and* turn a mill, is the peculiar claim of English verse." He was a great critic, and his words stand: they mean "inspiration."

If we inquire here what is the bearing of the word "inspiration" on the poetic art, it will be seen that this attractive by-lane has come quite naturally into our range of vision, and that it circles back to our road. Poetry is not a product, to be manufactured on certain lines and stocked and sold; that is the commercial aspect proper to the purveyor of verses, although entirely apart from the right of a true poet to be paid. With inspiration, choice of a theme becomes secondary—the sight or thought of the theme gives the impulse; the rock is struck, the waters flow. The poet does not go from object to object, from scene to scene of history, from phase to phase of emotion, constantly asking himself, "What shall I write a poem about?"—though such a process would seem to be the only mode of preparation known to some modern versifiers. He finds, rather, that the theme presses upon him until he must write to ease the burden; and when this urgency plucks at his heart, inspiration has begun. The swift motion thus quietly but definitely imparted is remarkably clear in a small volume of poems published three or four years ago—"To-morrow's Road," by G. M. Hort; a booklet of which, one is glad to know, four or five reviewers discovered the exceptional quality. Not one of the thirteen poems of this tiny collection is negligible. They are restless; they have a defiant ring about them; work of such value will not be lost, and though, as far as I know, this author has published nothing more, that may be a favourable sign.

A sure place among the younger poets was won by Mr. Robert Nichols, whose "Invocation," published in 1915, contained some of the finest sonnets the war has inspired, and whose larger collection of poems, issued last year under the title of "Ardours and Endurances," gave us for second part that beautiful imaginative work, "A Faun's Holiday." Apart from his sonnets, I do not think the war-poems can compare with this for style and sense of rhythm. In Mr. Siegfried Sassoon's new "War Poems" I find a certain roughness—obviously deliberate, but not necessarily right, and am confirmed in my opinion that the processes of war—the marches, the dressing-stations, the guns—do not generally lend themselves to fine expression. But Mr. Sassoon has powerful stanzas here and there; his "Prelude" and his "Dreamers" are true poetry of war, though of a different stamp from that inspired by the larger, more distant view.

Of a new volume, in the courageous "Adventurers All" series, entitled "Dunch," by Susan Miles, the critic finds himself rather timid. Was it worth while? "Dunch" appears to be a village; the effects of a visit to Dunch appear to be alarming:

"The curate had always much to tell his aunt.
For twenty years she had imbibed at nine o'clock each night
Cocoa and parochial horrors
Thick and well stirred. . . ."

Another Dunch reaction is commemorated in lines that do not exactly sing themselves into one's being:

"I do not want to discuss the price of flannelette with the doctor's wife.
I do not care whether flannelette costs fivepence three-farthings
Or fivepence halfpenny."

Certainly, I do not; and though there are traces of poetry in "Dunch"—especially when Miss Miles unbends to rhyme—the prose preponderates; smart prose, but—prose.

One other poet, Max Plowman, who has two books to his credit, in an entirely different manner is eager to interpret the art of poesy as something far more than prettily-adorned thought, and must be considered successful, however stringent criticism may be. He is an idealist, believing in love before everything, and his devotion to Blake is obvious. The man who can begin a sonnet thus is worth hearing:

"Stain not thy sword in melancholy thought;
This world hath other practice for thine arms."

From his "First Poems" (1913) the sonnet "Joy" may serve better than any summary to illustrate his achievement:

"Power unexpended grows to bitterness,
And Love subdued will turn to timorous shame;
Faith unexpressed is but an idle name;
Give tears to Sorrow, wouldst thou sorrow less.
Impulse by action doth itself confess,

Mr John Freeman.

R.J. SWAN, 1919.

Nor credulous ears give we unto the claim
Of such as seek to build an airy fame
Upon the huge intention they possess.

" But O, without thine aid, life-giving Joy,
What seeds of sweet accomplishment must die!
The sunless earth, upon whose breast they lie,
Is but a tomb which doth their life destroy;
Thou art the radiant power beneath whose beam
Deeds come to life, and dull endeavours gleam."

There are flaws here—the repetition of the word "life" in the sestet, and the " But O," for instance; yet the compact thought and fine handling of the sonnet-form is obvious. " The Golden Heresy," since published, is as good. Both these poets are natural, sincere, and above all *keen*. To rescue this work from the overflowing poetry-shelf in editorial offices was a pleasure, and the silence of these writers is a loss. I do not place them on the peaks; others have done bigger things; but I conceive it as part of my task to indicate, among the many, two or three who, so far, have received scant attention in the authoritative quarters.

Photo by E. O. Hoppé.

Miss Muriel Stuart.

It will inevitably be asked by some readers why names have been omitted that might legitimately have come within the scope of this essay. But an essay is not a catalogue; and I have endeavoured to give a representative selection of those whose work is still being done. There are others—John Freeman, Robin Flower, James A. Mackereth, W. H. Davies, Dorothy Margaret Stuart, Muriel Stuart; there are Francis Ledwidge, Rupert Brooke, Edward Tennant, who are gone from us; and the list could be extended to fill a column—whose poetry is of a high level. But I want to say something on the effect of the recent war on the development of poetry; no criticism is complete without a word on this. The hoarse uproar of battle stills the voices of the poets. Plenty of topical verse appeared, but the scaffolding of thought was too hurriedly erected. Looking back across the years, we note that interruptions charged with disaster and dissolution are comparatively impotent to cast any baleful proscription upon the general advance of poetry. Wars have no power to arrest it; neither plague nor famine can spoil its fair promise; the stream flows on, retarded here and there, with its shallows and deeps, but continuous and in the end triumphant. At times of national travail a special kind of inspiration is born, of which the true result is seen after the strain has passed. There is reason to believe that the recoil of the energy so recklessly spent in the struggle is producing its effect; that there is a finer awakening in the sphere of the arts, and therefore in the sphere of poetry than has been known for many years. One hundred years ago, Shelley, Keats, Wordsworth and Coleridge illumined their torches of thought and beauty, in times of trial; those splendours still gleam upon the shores of this century, and still mean power, romance and inspiration for us. Do they shine with an irrecoverable light? Time will show; we need not lose heart while we have among us so many who are lifting above the crowd the sacred flame, and who, with reverent feet, tread the way to the shrine.

BEN JONSON.*

By George Saintsbury.

INDULGENCE in unqualified superlatives has often, and for the most part justly, been rebuked. But if any one were to say that of all English writers of repute Ben Jonson is the most difficult to write about, some of those who know most about the matter would not be the first to protest against the statement. For the difficulties in his case are not only numerous and considerable in themselves, but quite unusually complicated. There is, if not exactly a crowded life history, an abundance of biographical detail—much of it of the anecdotic and legendary character which a writer neglects to the probable disappointment, or tackles to the possible tedium, of his readers. There is a strong and not entirely attractive character. There are a good many real and still more imputed contrasts and conflicts with other people. There is a very large bulk of work: and this work, though also largely pervaded by common features of handling, is very diverse in departmental character and sometimes apparently, if not really, inconsistent with itself. Lastly there have been endless " fights over the body " of the man and of his work which, again, a new advocate or adversary neglects or engages in at almost equal peril. The " Comedy of Humours," the Roman Tragedies, the " Conversations," the " Discoveries," the Masques—every title of these recalls, almost to the least expert of people who know anything about English literature, voices not merely prophesying but actively carrying on war. In fact the whole situation may be sampled and symbolised by the fact that his best known poem—one of his shortest and, according to some, one of his

* " Ben Jonson." By G. Gregory Smith. (Macmillan)

most charming things—has been alternately regarded and praised as such, and set aside as an impudent and tasteless plagiarism.

Nor is it possible for the author of a monograph to lessen these difficulties by boldly neglecting the personality and confining attention to the work. For Ben notoriously put his personality into almost everything—it would hardly be extravagant to drop the "almost"—that he wrote. You may cut down to the lowest notice of the "Poetomachia" (or squabbles of Ben, Marston, Dekker, etc.), which has of late been most tediously overdone. You may confine yourself, as to Shakespeare, to showing that Ben's "enmity" is simply a myth, and that his actual references make "Bakespearism" another myth. You may dismiss what Drummond said as not evidence: and so forth. But Benjamin Jonson the man *tamen usque recurret*, in prose and verse, in tragedy and comedy and masque, in ode and epigram, in madrigal and in animadversion. And both man and work are of types now mainly obsolete: though the substitution of Science for Learning has generated corresponding ones. To all which may be added that Jonson's great champion, Gifford, was an exaggerated version of his client in respect of unpopular pugnacity; and that his more recent though less thorough apologist, Mr. Swinburne, complicated his usual excess of expression in this case by some defects, very unusual with him, of positive knowledge.

But Professor Gregory Smith has not been daunted by difficulties; and has certainly produced in this volume the most complete and concentrated exposition of Ben that has ever been put together. He deals in two chapters with the life; in one (under the title of "Literary Conscience") with Ben's general character as an author; then, allotting one chapter to each with the Comedies, the Masques, the Tragedies and "The Sad Shepherd"—that exquisite and to some, though not to the wisest, inexplicable "find" of honey in the lion—the Poems, and under the title of "Spolia Opima" the criticism, with a final one on Influence. Incidentally, though for the most part without personal single-sticks, he deals also with antecedent criticism so that hardly anything is left out: while (an even more unusual thing in books of critical history) nothing irrelevant is put in. The thing of course is intended, as everything of its kind worth notice must be intended, not as a substitute for reading the original but as a preparation to and companion for such reading The people who want spirited and florid rhetorical declamations on the general subject—requiring nothing in the reader, and probably based on little in the writer, of actual study of that subject itself—may not like it. In fact it was obviously not written for them. Those who appreciate and who, in this instance, have been waiting for something of its kind, will find what they want. No such good account, in limited but comparatively general space, exists or at least is known to us, of the Masques which are Jonson's most idiosyncratic work and which ought to be made accessible—in form separate from the rest, but whole of themselves and not mixed with others of the same kind. The mote-like maze of the smaller poems has seldom, if it has ever, been sifted and classified so carefully. The "Comedy of Humours"—a thing much talked about—is here put from a fresh point of view which, whether one agrees to take it unreservedly or not, supplies a most useful *datum* for final "triangulation." As to the Tragedies, Mr. Gregory Smith may perhaps seem to some to dwell rather on their accidental than on their essential features—on the external reproach of classicism which he is rightly concerned to mitigate, than on the actual tragic quality, This is perhaps greater both in "Sejanus" and in "Cataline" than has been generally conceded, and the fragment, small as it is, of "The Fall of Mortimer" shows that something greater still might have been added if Fate had been propitious. The "sifting," as it has been called, of the poems is done in a craftman-like fashion: and no one of the diligent anatomists who for some years have been so busy in cutting up and carrying off as some one else's Ben's curious re-articulations of ancient critical sentences, can complain that he is merely "made fun of" (as has been sometimes, no doubt reprehensibly, done). On the other hand, no reasonable person among the fun-makers can accuse Mr. Gregory Smith of neglecting, or failing to give full value to Dryden's apology for Ben's production—an apology, let it be added, which was probably made with much fuller knowledge of the case than most people, till they were helped to it by Professor Schelling and M. Castelain, could boast of.

Yet he has not attempted, and has been wise not to attempt, any "tabloid" and easily quotable estimate of the whole of his subject: even that "influence" with which the last chapter deals being judicially dealt with after the fashion of a summing up, and the actual verdict "left to the jury." Perhaps a reviewer does not magnify his office intolerably if he considers himself to be a sort of juror for the nonce, and tries to formulate, if only partially, some of the conclusions to which he has been led, partly by his own reading and partly by the evidence here brought together with so much accuracy and dealt with in so impartial a spirit.

It has been said above that it is impossible entirely to dismiss or "mask" Jonson's personality with the "perfervid" character which he may have inherited from the North, but which certainly does not seem to have been in the least "phlegmatised" by three generations of Southern domicile. It may however be suggested that it *is* possible to pay too much attention to it. It no doubt affected the manner, the degree, the temperamental quality of his utterances very much; it must have accentuated the expression of the real idiosyncrasy of his genius; but it was not and could not be that idiosyncrasy itself. What that was must be sought elsewhere. And perhaps we may best find the peculiar mixture (people forget sometimes that the very word idiosyncrasy means "mixture") in Ben's consummate combination of what may seem to be the parasitic with the really original. Therapeutics tell us that there are drugs which pass through the body apparently unchanged and which yet exercise a powerful reagency on it—a reagency displaying itself in definite modifications of bodily symptoms and functions. Something of the same kind happened with Ben: and it has puzzled his commentators terribly. From one point of view "Drink to me only with thine eyes" is a mere mosaic and even something worse—a putting together not of individually insignificant bits in an original

pattern, but of full-sensed phrases—as if you should make up a new body of whole arms, legs, etc., taken from already existing creatures. Yet to anyone who does not know this, and fortunately to some who do, the poem is as one and indivisible—as true-born and with as separate an existence—as any poem they know. Less successfully, but in the same way, Ben has woven his fragments of Sallust and of Tacitus into tragic screeds which are not mere shoddy, but worthy palls for the Muse if not on the stage, at any rate in the study. And though at the moment it may not be the popular idea with critics, the defence applies with renewed cogency to those "Discoveries" which have been of late so much pulled to pieces. It is of course possible that the author, who never published them, never intended to publish them in their actual form at all; that they were merely half-done work meant for "recoction," but unfortunately exposed by chance to the gaze of the very persons to whom half-done work should be taboo. They might be not even this: but a sort of literary "malt"—material to be completely transformed in subsequent process. But there is no need to confess, and avoid in this manner. Not merely in his critical diatribes on general points, but in the famous and apparently original notices of Bacon and of Shakespeare, Ben undoubtedly did include whole sentences—nay, actual contexts—of Seneca and others. What of it? Seneca and the others were not speaking of Shakespeare and Bacon, any more than Philostratus was thinking of Celia. In each case Ben Jonson, a thorough representative of the age which found the classics most congenial to it, found in these classics phrases and passages which thoroughly expressed what he wanted to say in prose or verse. He took these, combined them more or less afresh, applied them to new subjects and in all the best (which are numerous) cases infused into them, with the usual "God knows *how*" of genius, something that was not there before, that is there now, and that made them what they are. If anybody agrees with Lord Foppington and his preference for "the natural *spraouts* of a man's own brain" let him. But let him also allow *us* to be quite content, without prejudice to these interesting vegetables, with such things as the "Song to Celia" and the "Character of Shakespeare," when they present themselves.

THE CHILDREN'S HOUR.

By Katharine Tynan.

THE publishers are as busy as ever this year with Christmas books, and I have under my hand a bundle of books for all ages, from the schoolboy or schoolgirl to the children. There will be plenty of reading this Christmas: and I imagine that the man who has never ceased to be a schoolboy at heart and the woman who has never ceased to be a schoolgirl, will take surreptitious peeps into such a splendid Christmas book for boys as "Herbert Strang's Annual."[1] It would not be easy to beat this book for sheer value. There is none of your sprawling type, but close printing, not too close, in two columns to a page, of stories and articles all calculated to interest the boy and the old boy, even the girl and the old girl of these strenuous days. Here are stories of adventure, school stories, stories of fights by land and sea, articles on mountain climbing, railway building, the Channel Tunnel, all sorts of wonderful things, accompanied by a great number of pictures, coloured and uncoloured. The Annual is, in fact, twenty Christmas books bound in one, and lucky the boy who gets it for a Christmas present, and blessed the giver who is wise enough to select it.

"The Wonder Book"[2] which grows more wonderful with the years, is for the nursery rather than the schoolroom, if the nursery does not emancipate itself too early. Here are all the old favourites—Jessie Pope, Agnes Grozier Herbertson, Fay Inchfawn, Isabel Maud Peacocke, and others, who keep the child in their own hearts, so that they know what things delight a child. Then the illustrations are by really good artists, our old and dear friend Louis Wain, Margaret Tarrant, Maud Earl, Charles Robinson, and other famous people. For "The Wonder Book," like the various Strang annuals, aims at setting the best before the children. I never saw an annual as full of jolly dogs as "The Wonder Book." In the full use it makes of animals it is English in the most lovable sense of being English.

The Grizzly Bear.
From "Nursery Lays of Nursery Days" (Blackwell).

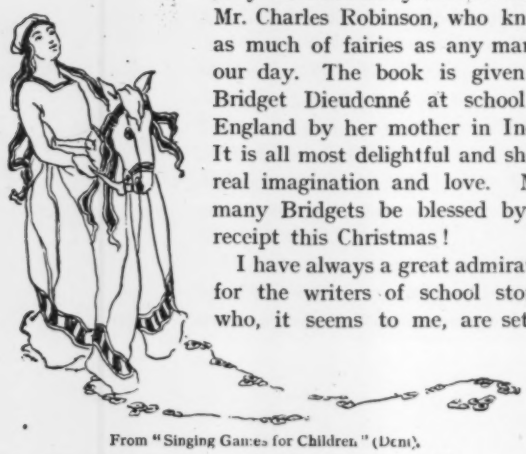
"Tony o' Dreams"[3] has for its end paper a picture of a knight in full armour riding up to a dark tower, with pixies and fairies and hobgoblins in all the undergrowth. It prepares one for the story which is extremely fanciful and charmingly written. There is no unreality about Tony's adventures such as often makes the fairy-book unconvincing. The imaginative child will delight in the tale of Tony's adventures, written and pictured for him by two Nightingales, and that might well be part of Tony's adventures. The illustrations are as ingenious and as charmingly coloured as the tale itself. I heartily commend it to the buyer of Christmas books.

[1] "Herbert Strang's Annual." Cloth, 7s. 6d. net; Boards, 6s. net. (Oxford University Press.)

[2] "The Wonder Book." 6s. net. (Ward, Lock.)

[3] "Tony o' Dreams." By M. Nightingale. 7s. 6d. net. (Oxford: Blackwell.)

In "Bridget's Fairies"[4] Mrs. Sinclair Stevenson has really a quite new idea, for the fairies are no other than the knowledge one acquires and the art one learns to make, from Madam Mathematics to Princess Poetry, and the gifts the fairies give to Bridget are just the joy and delight one wins from learning and making. It is not at all pragmatical and schoolmistressish, as one might suppose: it is charming, sweet, pretty and ingenious. Perhaps the boy who never could do mathematics or the girl who weeps over her geography might find this a wise and illuminating book. It is most beautifully and fancifully illustrated by Mr. Charles Robinson, who knows as much of fairies as any man in our day. The book is given to Bridget Dieudonné at school in England by her mother in India. It is all most delightful and shows real imagination and love. May many Bridgets be blessed by its receipt this Christmas!



From "Singing Games for Children" (Dent).

I have always a great admiration for the writers of school stories, who, it seems to me, are set to making bricks without straw, or many bricks with very little straw, and usually do it very well indeed. The new times have not yet invaded the girls' schools, and it is a very restricted field for writing: but in a boy's book there is more room for adventure. In "The Boys of Fellingham School"[5] there are really thrilling adventures quite beyond the ordinary school life. The discovery of hidden treasure by the schoolboys, the dangers they were in therefrom, the smuggler's cave, the treasure-chest—all the ingredients of the true adventure story are well shaken and intermingled with the excitements of ordinary school life. This will be a very popular book with schoolboys.

To boys of all ages, from eight to eighty, may be commended "Cameron Island,"[6] a capital book of adventure of the most thrilling kind. We are whirled off to the South Seas and from that point the tale goes with tremendous vigour, incident after incident following in breathless succession. There is a boy in the uniform of an American scout on the first page, and on the second Frank Scott prefixes a remark by the exclamation, "Gee!" Otherwise its American derivation is not stressed, which is quite as it should be, since such a book as "Cameron Island" is for the international boy. The book has some spirited illustrations.

From "Singing Games for Children" (Dent).

This Christmas will hardly see a more charming book than Mrs. Farjeon's "Singing Games for Children,"[7] beautifully illustrated by a true artist. Mrs. Farjeon has added to the authentic singing games—to "Green Gravel" and "Round Apple" and "London Bridge has Fallen Down"—do children of these days still play at them?—and her imagination is as the imagination of the old unknown makers. Her rhymes are as fresh and clean and have colours as those which suggest a morning world of dew. There is real poetry in these delightful songs: the game is not forgotten, and the setting in Mrs. Farjeon's words and Mr. Littlejohns' pictures is as bright as a jewel and as fresh as a flower. One hopes these "singing games" may be adopted in the schools. They would be good for the children's souls and bodies.

From "Singing Games for Children" (Dent).

From "The Tale of the Trail of a Snail" (Jarrolds).

"The Misdoings of Micky and Mac"[8] has an Irish smack about the title, as Miss Peacocke's books have had before now, so that it is rather a shock to find that their real names were Cecil Wellington Willoughby-Brown and Francis Nelson Willoughby-Brown. However that wasn't their fault, and they lived up much better to their familiar names of Micky and Mac. Both were bags of mischief, and so

[4] "Bridget's Fairies." By Mrs. Sinclair Stevenson. 4s. 6d. net. (R.T.S.)

[5] "The Boys of Fellingham School." By John G. Rowe. 6s. net. (Harrap.)

[6] "Cameron Island." By Edwin C. Burritt. 5s. (Oliphants.)

[7] "Singing Games for Children." By Eleanor Farjeon. Illustrated by J. Littlejohns, R.B.A. 6s. net. (Dent.)

[8] "The Misdoings of Micky and Mac." By Isabel M. Peacocke. 3s. 6d. net. (Ward, Lock.)

Stephen MacKenna.

R.J.SWAN, 1919.

well are they rendered that one suspects they are real boys and that their chronicler, who might be a loving aunt, secretly approves and delights in them and their doings. One knows such stumbling-blocks in the way of reproof to children, the one standing by who thoroughly enjoys the prank which is being rebuked, and spoils the whole moral lesson therefor, for there is no deceiving children. Ah! here it is, staring one in the face.

"Mrs. Willoughby-Brown always declared that Dulcie discounted her influence for good over the boys by her unconquerable habit of laughter." Well, Micky and Mac are a very jolly pair and a very good corrective for the blues. The book is not all pranks. They have some really exciting adventures, and there is a certain amount of grown-up interest which is skilfully kept in the background. I heartily recommend this gay and cheerful book.

The dolls would not be dressed before breakfast.

From "The Wonder Book" (Ward, Lock).

Here again, in "Nursery Lays of Nursery Days,"[9] we find the two Sister Nightingales in collaboration. They are true artists. The poems of childhood escape what has haunted writers of such poems for the last two decades, namely the influence of "A Child's Garden of Verses." The unique work of the unique Stevenson has been reproduced in a thousand conscious or unconscious imitations. Here Stevenson's very subjects are treated without a trace of Stevensonian influence. The poems are simple and charming, entirely unaffected and full of tender feeling, not above the head of a child, nor in the manner of a grown-up condescending to a child. Indeed they are what they set out to be, made of the memories of a sensitive child, the very stuff that dreams are made of: and the little illustrative woodcuts have something of Blake about them. Here is one of the poems, not better than another:

THE FIDDLER-MAN.

"I'm sure he's old and tired though no one told me so,
For he walked so very slowly and his beard was white as snow;
His poor arm shook and trembled as he worked his fiddle-bow,
I think that when his fiddle played it only cried, you know.

[9] "Nursery Lays of Nursery Days." By M. Nightingale. 2s. net. (Oxford: Blackwell.)

The Voyage.

From "Tony o' Dreams" (Blackwell).

So I said: 'Are you sorrowful, fiddler-man?
Here's a penny to comfort you if it can.'

"But I didn't speak quite loudly: I think I was afraid
(He didn't hold his hat as though he wanted to be paid)—
But he leaned his bended back against the railings as he played,
And his fiddle went on crying with the music that it made.
So I said: 'Are you lonely, fiddler-man?
I do want to comfort you if I can.'

"But I think he never heard me as he stood there in the rain,
Nor saw the kiss I threw him, nor heard me tap the pane.
He looked so sad and lonely as he hobbled down the lane,
And then he turned the corner, and I won't see him again,
For now that he's gone though I ran and ran,
I never could catch that fiddler-man."

One hopes this charming little book will not be overlooked because of its very modest exterior.

"Auntie would wrinkle and quiver the end of her nose like a rabbit."

From "The Misdoings of Micky and Mac" (Ward, Lock).

The last two books in the bundle, "The Tale of the Trail of a Snail"[10] and "Mr. Bunnykin's Busy Day"[11] belong to the class of book which Miss Beatrix Potter made to be a nursery classic. They are very prettily illustrated in colour, these innocent stories for young children, and the print of one is large and clear enough to set Baby to tracing the letters out for himself.

[10] "The Tale of the Trail of a Snail." By Alan Wright. 3s. 6d. net. (Jarrolds.)

[11] "Mr. Bunnykin's Busy Day." By Alan Wright. 3s. 6d. net. (Jarrolds.)

"Why-So Stories." By Edwin Gile Rich. With Frontispiece by M. C. Ford, and Line Illustrations by Charles Copeland. 5s. net. (Harrap.)

"Thinking it Out." A book which investigates in a simple manner some of the everyday physical laws. By Archibald Williams. Illustrated. 5s. net. (Nelson.)

"The Boys' Book of the Open Air." Edited by Eric Wood. With many Illustrations in Colour and Black-and-white. 7s. 6d. net. (Cassell.)

"Jean and the Boys." By May Baldwin. Illustrated by Percy Tarrant. (Chambers.)

THE LURE OF THE OCCULT.

BY C. S. EVANS.

IT was probably the cave-man who told the first ghost story, and he almost certainly told it very well, because he believed in it. To him, consciously at war with nature, the presence of an inimical force external to nature seemed an obvious thing, and he evolved his theology from his theories concerning it, just as he evolved his religious ritual from the ceremonies he devised to circumvent or placate it. We men of a later age stand where the cave-man did in our relations to the unknown; the same problems that perplexed him perplex us, except that we recognise in them far greater complications, and are perhaps a little less serious in approaching them. His witch-doctors dwelt remote, clothed in awful mystery, with every appurtenance of terror—skull and bones and snakeskin and filth about them; ours wear top-hats and frock coats and are grocers and other respectable things in the day-time. He worked charms with dried blood and potent herbs; our masters of the occult do conjuring tricks with tambourines and little tables.

It is, however, to literature that we must turn if we are to realise the essential elements of man's attitude to the unknown. Not merely to the written records of man's experiences and investigations—not to the journals of psychical research societies, which are, generally speaking, inexpressibly dull, but to those imagined things, those "ghost stories" which now and again capable artists give us, and which we read in the profound hope that they are not true. All such stories, all that count at any rate, concern themselves with terror. Their aim is the *recherche du frisson*, they are the modern counterpart of the ancient witch-doctor's hymn to his spirits; they are the expression of the wild, unreasoning fear that numbs the heart of man when he feels that presently something may spring at him out of the dark.

There are very few ghost stories which possess this authentic thrill, and the fashion of them changes, for we are more sophisticated nowadays than we used to be. Our great grandfathers could extract an enjoyable horror from spirits that walked about in moated granges, satisfactorily clanking chains. All that these simple souls required to make them happy was a headless horror in a dark passage outside a panelled chamber, carrying its eyes in its hand. For such robust susceptibilities Mrs. Radcliffe, the Rev. Charles Maturin,

and Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley catered; but to-day our scepticism of anything so concrete as their phantoms destroys our enjoyment; we must needs dignify our tremors by a quasi-scientific explanation. We have classified our ghosts, so that young ladies in drawing-rooms can talk glibly of elementals, poltergeists, etherical projections, Barrovians, Vagrarians, Semi, and all the rest of it, in appropriate jargon.

The shortest and perhaps the most perfect ghost story in the world is told by Dr. M. R. James in his "Ghost Stories of an Antiquary." It is the tale of a woman who was staying in a strange house. She was shown her room; she entered, locked the door, undressed, blew out the candle and got into bed. Then, as she lay there in the dark, came a little, horrible voice from above: "Now we're safely shut in for the night!" . . .

If that story does not produce a thrill, no more sophisticated tale will do so. It is the ghost story reduced to its lowest terms—the essential ghost story, the effect of which is to rouse those unreasoning terrors which lie dormant in all of us, and which wake to life in the presence of the unknown. There are many ways of sounding these depths of terror. The effective ghost story must be mysterious, yet mystery is not enough. One of the most mysterious things in the world is an equilateral triangle, but only the crazed soul of a Futurist artist is likely to be haunted by a thing like that. The effective ghost story must be horrible, yet horror is not enough; there is a certain horror in the thought of a comet plunging for ever into the depths of space, but the tranquil mind is not disturbed thereby. The horror of the occult must be symbolistic, portentous; it must carry with it a sense of loathing and unspeakable obscenity. The sought-for *frisson*, hardly attained, must be a very shudder of the soul, the awful gesture of life threatened by malign and desolating forces.

Masterpieces in this genre are of course very few. One may indeed count them on the fingers of a hand. Some of Edgar Poe's tales ought certainly to be included in any list of the greatest ghost stories, especially "The Fall of the House of Usher," a tale which for sheer concentrated horror is unequalled in literature. The opening passages of that wonderful tale strike upon the consciousness like a knell. Material things dissolve, and one steps across the borderland. Place should be given also to the one or two somewhat more complex and ambitious studies made by Bulwer Lytton, particularly in "Zanoni" and "A Strange Story," but like most of his other work, Lytton's tales of the supernatural are more than a little exotic, and we of the present age may be forgiven if we regard them as somewhat pretentious. It is however the modern writer who has excelled pre-eminently in the tale of the occult. Dr. M. R. James's "Ghost Stories of an Antiquary," two volumes of which were published by Mr. Edward Arnold five or six years ago, contain some of the eeriest tales ever written. You may sup full of horrors if you sup with Dr. James. He never bothers with the dreary scientific kind of tale, but is frankly at home with mediæval superstitions and black magic; his properties are familiar spirits, anthropophagous, with clutching hairy paws, and spiders—especially spiders. A cold shiver runs down the spine even when one thinks in retrospect of that horrible old gentleman of his whose face was a mass of cobwebs.

Mr. Algernon Blackwood has written a great many stories of the occult, but few of them can be classed in the first rank of ghost stories. He began well with "The Whisperer, and Other Tales," but some of his later books read like extracts from the proceedings of the Psychical Research Society. He peers forward amiably into the unknown, blinking benevolently, and tightly clutching a volume of Bergson.

Very different, and far finer from an artistic point of view, are the stories of Mr. Arthur Machen, collected in the volume called "The House of Souls" (published by Grant Richards some years ago, but now, I believe, out of print). Nor must Mr. Oliver Onions's "Widdershins" (Martin Secker) be forgotten, and those masterpieces of Rudyard Kipling's, scattered about in various volumes—"The Mark of the Beast," "They" and "The Brushwood Boy." In a place very little after these I would put three books by William Hope Hodgson, whose pen, alas, is laid down for ever; "The House on the Borderland," "The Ghost Pirates" and "The Boats of the Glen-Carrig."

And so we come, by devious degrees, to the supreme masterpiece of all the literature of the supernatural, the story called "The Turn of the Screw," which you shall find in the volume by Henry James entitled "The Two Magics." Fastidious artist as he was, Henry James approached even a *conte* of the horrible with delicacy. He knew that the crowning horror of horrible things is achieved when they are placed in close juxtaposition with the commonplace, and he knew, too, that the sense of horror is best awakened and maintained by means of a subjective study. "The Turn of the Screw" may be described as the story of the corruption of the souls of two children by malign influences exercised through the spirits of the dead, but it is something far more than this. The significance of it glows and fades, changing with the mood, so that, on a second or third reading one wonders whether it is intended as a ghost story at all—whether it is not rather a profound study of the effect of fear upon a delicate and sensitive nature. One may never know why the boy Miles left his bed at night to stare in horrible entrancement at that figure on the lawn, or whether the ghost of Peter Quint really walked to work evil. One is not sure whether the girl Flora held fearful communings in the wood with the spirit of the governess, dead and for ever damned, or whether the whole thing was not merely the overstrained imagination of the narrator. In either case, the sense of horror is insistent, and in some obscure way the author has managed to hint at a significance which is revolting and obscene.

Outside art, there is another kind of writing of the occult which has become increasingly common in recent years—the record of so-called personal experience in the realm of the unknown. This branch of literature has a jargon of its own. People do not die, they "pass over," and their spirits hold a sort of telephonic communication with the living through the agency of "mediums," and with the help of a whole paraphernalia of apparatus—cabinets and tambourines and ouija boards and planchette. Of all branches of literature

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there is none that is less calculated to appeal to the imagination than this. It is associated with material accessories which are almost symbolically unbeautiful—oilcloth, and the smell of paraffin oil, cheap American organs and concertinas, stout and stupid middle-aged women, Americans with names like Hiram K. Brown, squalor, and confusion, and untidiness of mind. Everybody has seen the kind of book I mean, with the portrait of the "subject" in the front looking like the lady who proclaims from the back page of the newspaper, "I had bad legs and dropsical swellings, but Billions' Pills cured me!" In the face of this feeble nonsense the strongest souls turn sceptic, and beside it the witchcraft of ancient days seems a dignified and even a worthy belief.

I have said enough about books on the occult to render the detailed reviewing of the newest batch of them unnecessary. "Patience Worth, a Psychic Mystery,"[1] by Caspar Yost, comes to us from America and is one of those so-called authentic documents. The less one says about it the better, except that judging from the specimens of Patience Worth's literary exercises, as communicated to the medium and duly recorded, the lady would have done better to have rested mute and inglorious on the "other side." Patience Worth speaks in a kind of debased Wardour Street English which must be distressing to those of her spirit-companions whose souls are still sensitive to the beauties of language.

[1] "Patience Worth: A Psychic Study." By Caspar S. Yost. 7s. 6d. net. (Skeffington.)

"The Ghost World,"[2] by J. Wickwar, is a collection of anecdotes of the occult. Violet Tweedale's "Ghosts I Have Seen"[3] is a volume of literary tittle-tattle with an occult bias. The author is a daughter of one of the Chambers of Edinburgh, and she has much that is interesting to say, but ghosts must by this time be three-a-penny in her household. The only thrill I got from the book was produced by the two awful eyes on Mr. Jenkins's very effective cover. But perhaps the author did not write the book with the object of pleasing epicures in sensation.

"The Eternal Question,"[4] by Allan Clarke, is obviously a sincere outpouring from the heart of a man who has suffered the grief of a great loss; it would be indecent to be flippant about it. And "Voices from the Void,"[5] by Hester Travers Smith, is void of any convincing voices.

I cannot like these books, but Mr. Edward Arnold has promised us a new volume of the "Ghost Stories of an Antiquary," and already I feel the pleasant shivers running down my spine. . . . There was that horrible creature that moved across the picture to the windows of the house. . . . I shall turn on all the lights before I go to bed.

[2] "The Ghost World." By J. W. Wickwar. 2s. 6d. net. (Jarrolds.)
[3] "Ghosts I Have Seen." By Violet Tweedale. 7s. 6d. net. (Jenkins.)
[4] "The Eternal Question." By Allan Clarke. 7s. 6d. net. (Dent.)
[5] "Voices from the Void." By Hester Travers Smith. 3s. 6d. net. (Rider.)

RUSKIN AT WIGTOWN.

BY DRUMCOLIN.

I AM an enthusiastic lover of Ruskin; my admiration is from the heart as well as from the head, and yet it is a sane admiration; I am carried away, not by *every*thing he says, but by the broad, grand principles of what he *means*. In this, his centenary year, we are being lectured about him, and things are being written of him, as never before. I have heard and have read. But why, always, so much insistence on such details as the "not-less-than ten-year-old-wine" of the St. George's Guild or the anti-railway bias? To the Ruskin student these are matters of curiosity and *relative* interest, never obscuring the true greatness of the man; to the casual listener or reader—to the possible disciple of Ruskin, the time or space (ever with a running accompaniment of cheap witticisms!) given to these "peculiarities" often proves a stumbling-block; oftener, perhaps, a barrier. We want the "man-in-the-street" to be led to Ruskin. But the same man likes his railways—he has grown up amongst them. It will take considerably longer than the whole duration of a lecture to persuade *him* that there was a man who *hated* railways and that that man was one of the Great Ones of the World. Ignore these small things therefore, or at least treat them as they ought to be treated, and lead your listener straight to the noble ideas of this other "golden-hearted man."

You can get very near to the heart of your author by getting into his "Country"—visiting the scenes he loved. I have always felt this, and, when I could, acted on it. So, a spell of leave in 1917 took me on a cycle tour from the East Coast of England to the West of Scotland, through Galloway. I expressly made a detour to include Wigtown.

In "Præterita" Ruskin pays a splendid compliment to the "rural towns of South Scotland":

> "There was greater refinement in them," he says, "and more honourable pride than probably at that time [1850–1860 roughly] in any other district in Europe; a certain pathetic melody and power of tradition consecrating nearly every scene with some past light, either of heroism or religion."

Ruskin's connection with the towns of South Scotland, and with Wigtown especially, is to be gathered both from "Dilecta" and "Præterita." His grandmother, Catherine Tweddale, was a descendant of the Adairs of Gennoch and the Agnews of Lochnaw, hereditary Sheriffs of Wigtownshire. This Catherine Tweddale's niece, also Catherine Tweddale, married George Agnew, hereditary Sheriff-Clerk of Wigtown, and their daughter was Joan, afterwards Mrs. Arthur Severn—the "Joanie" who grew up in the "pretty old house at Wigtown" and whose gentle care cheered the author's last days. In a note, Ruskin says this "pretty old house" is

> "now pulled down and the site taken for the new county buildings. The house as it once stood is to be seen in the

Viola Meynell

R.J. SWAN,

centre of the woodcut at page 6 of Gordon Fraser's 'Guide,' with the Stewartry hills in the distance. I have seldom seen a truer rendering of the look of an old Scottish town."

This last remark was enough to give me an uncontrollable desire to possess a copy of that Guide if I could. So a wet September evening saw me, tired by a head-wind but buoyed up with the hope of "treasure-trove," push slowly round by the foot of the Martyrs' Monument hill and on into the ancient burgh of Wigtown.

I made straight for the Post Office, having arranged that my letters were to be addressed there; but, alas! no letters—only my weekly paper: had expected word from home and was disappointed. Now, the Post Office was one of the post-office-cum-chemist's-cum-stationer's type; and the man who runs that type is usually a man worth knowing and knows something worth saying about the district he does business in. I must, of course, have some picture post cards, and, during the selective search, I casually asked if he had ever heard of Gordon Fraser's "Guide to Wigtown"—never for a moment anticipating that here, right away, I had stumbled on the one man in all Wigtown who *had* every reason to know about the "Guide." "Certainly, he knew the 'Guide,' aye, and Gordon Fraser too; for hadn't he served his apprenticeship with him, and hadn't he taken over his premises when he retired?" (I had forgotten about post cards now, and was truly "hanging" on his words—"I'm properly in luck this time," I was thinking.) "Yes, and in one of the store-rooms taken over he had found *piles* of the Guide." (Feel my eyes must be glinting with greed here—picture myself already with a dozen "Guides" for careful distribution amongst enthusiastic friends!) "Since then had been giving them away to anyone interested, and they were all gone now and out of print (visible drop in thermometer!)—except one copy he had just recently presented to the town Library for fear trace of it should be *entirely* lost." Despondently: "Hadn't he any *at all* left? Was he *sure* there wasn't *one* still left in the shop?" "Thought there *might* still be one; would search." A few tense moments for me, and, at last! he discovers one with the identical woodcut referred to by Ruskin, and with it a piece of Gordon Fraser's business notepaper headed by the same woodcut. "I could have the notepaper if I cared, but he wouldn't like to part with the 'Guide.'" Nonplussed again! it was the woodcut in the "Guide" I wanted—the actual reproduction which Ruskin mentioned and praised; and though I was of course greatly interested in the reproduction on the notepaper, yet *that* was not *the* one. I thanked him for the piece of notepaper but pressed for the "Guide" itself, explaining the reason of my great interest (wondering the while if I were politic in telling what might make him stick all the more closely to it!) I would give him what he cared to ask for it. My evident interest and anxiety moved him at last. "Ah, well," he said, "you can have it—especially as one copy [the Library one] at any rate is sure to be preserved, and, after all, you are so interested in it that it will mean much more to you than it would to me. No! won't take anything for it—take it and the notepaper, and welcome!" *Elated* is a mild term to express how I felt. I insisted, though, on his accepting a nominal amount so as to clinch the bargain. "To keep you from asking me to hand it back again," I said, half jestingly. I hurried away to the hotel with my prize. It was my first real experience of that feeling book-lovers must have when they happen on a rare and much sough after first edition, and next morning I descended on my benefactor's shop, and in sheer exuberance bought photos, more post cards, a "Guide to Wigtownshire," stamps and toothpowder! I learned from him then that the woodcut was the work of one Andrew Furlow. There were not, as far as he knew, any extant copies of other works by Furlow, who, with his family, had left Wigtown. He was unable to tell me *when* he left or *where* he went to, and I did not pursue the inquiry elsewhere.

I had stopped overnight at the Galloway Arms Hotel—the second of the two high buildings seen on the right-hand side of the woodcut, and one of the old-time coaching places. Forty pairs of horses were kept there at one time, and four coaches left each day.

Ruskin must have heard of the banishment of the Wigtown Crows from their haunts in the old trees of Wigtown Square. I wonder what he thought of it? Gordon Fraser didn't miss the opportunity, and the amusing episode is given in rime in his "History of the Wigtown Crows." Mine host of the Galloway Arms told me that that year (1917), for the first time since their expulsion thirty-seven and a half years ago, a pair of "corbies" came and built in the old trees!

The "past light of religion" which consecrates Wigtown is thus referred to by Ruskin:

"... In the Churchyard ... close to the old Agnew burying-ground (where most of Joanie's family are laid) are the graves of Margaret MacLachlan and Margaret Wilson, over which in rhythm is recorded on little square tombstones the story of their martyrdom."

Wigtown.

From an old woodcut in "Fraser's Penny Guide to Wigtown and Neighbourhood."

Interesting as the tombstones are, I was much more interested in the stakes still pointed out as those to which the two heroines were tied—and I stood for a time by that to which the young girl, Margaret Wilson, was bound, and tried to picture the scene on that fateful day. As the waters rose she sang a psalm, but I would fain imagine her gaining strength of spirit from the broad mass and mist-wreathed crest of Cairnsmore opposite, under the impulse of those grand words, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help."

And the district you look out upon from this side of Wigtown Bay is, on the best authority, a wonderful one. First, a glimpse of the Solway sands, the impressions of which, to Ruskin, "are a part of the greatest teaching that I ever received during the joy of youth"; while, for Turner, "they became the most pathetic that formed his character in the prime of life, and the five Liber Studiorum subjects, 'Solway Moss,' 'Peat Bog, Scotland,' 'The Falls of Clyde,' 'Ben Arthur,' and 'Dumblane Abbey,' remain more complete expressions of his intellect, and more noble monuments of his art, than all his mightiest after work." Then Carlyle (who, by the way, had once been a guest of Joanie's grandfather in Wigtown) was especially impressed by the shores seen in part across the bay—he told Queen Victoria "he believed there was no finer or more beautiful drive in her kingdom than the one round the shore of the Stewartry, by Gatehouse of Fleet." And finally, when, in 1883, Ruskin revisited Tweedside and "the Solway Shores from Dumfries to Wigtown," it seemed to him "that this space of low mountain-ground, with the eternal sublimity of its rocky seashores, of its stormy seas and dangerous sands; its strange and mighty crags . . . and its pathless moorlands, haunted by the driving cloud, had been of more import in the true world's history than all the lovely countries of the South, except only Palestine."

New Books.

BIRDS AND A LOVER.*

Mr. Hudson's "Birds in a Village" appeared as long ago as 1893; and, as happens so often to good books in these short times, it fell out of print. That is by way of being fortunate for us, as the inevitable reissue has given the author an opportunity of adding some new matter in his best vein. Thus, there is a whole new section called "Birds in a Cornish Village," the six papers of which are sure of welcome from all good Hudsonians.

If a ukase were issued confining Mr. Hudson to merely one realm of natural life (Heaven forbid such an abbreviation of our joy!) most of his admirers would decide that birdland must be that limited monarchy. About birds he is always at his best. In the new chapters we find him at Lelant, unwell, but cheerful, and, as usual, looking about for anything the local birds might have to say. What a pleasure it must be to have this gift of communion with nature! Mr. Hudson found curlews at Lelant, and they comforted him. All I could ever find at Lelant was golfers, and they annoyed me. I refrain from recording my own emotions; but I give instead (what indeed is more to the point) the emotions of Mr. Hudson upon the bird-haunted Hayle estuary:

"The river or estuary, in sight of the doors and windows of the village, was haunted every day by numbers of gulls and curlews. These last numbered about one hundred and fifty birds, and were always there except at full tide, when they would fly away to the fields and moors. Of all my bird neighbours I think that these gave me most pleasure, especially at night, when lying awake I would listen by the hour to the perpetual curlew conversations going on in the dark—an endless series of clear modulated notes and trills, with a beautiful expression of wildness and freedom, a reminder of lonely sea-shores and mountains and moorlands in the north country. What wonder that Stevenson, sick in his tropical island—sick for his cold grey home so many thousands of miles away, wished once more to hear the whaup crying over the graves of his forefathers, and to hear no more at all!"

One of Mr. Hudson's most attractive chapters is the story of a jackdaw, reproduced as it was told to him in the shrewd and humorous vernacular of a boy belonging to the working-classes. I want to quote it, but dare not; for the main difficulty in writing about Mr. Hudson is to refrain from transcribing all of the many paragraphs one marks as one reads. Instead I will remind him that in his reference to the legendary contest of song between a minstrel and a nightingale he misspells the name of Crashaw, whose "Muses's Duel" is possibly the finest version of Strada's ubiquitous poem. Mr. Hudson calls this "perhaps the finest bird poem in our language." Perhaps it is; and we will hush at once the objectors who want to quote Keats and Shelley and Wordsworth against us, by reminding them that "To a Skylark" and the "Ode to a Nightingale" are, in a sense, not "bird" poems at all, but records of the poets' emotions at the songs of the birds they chanced to hear. In other words, they are "subjective"; Crashaw's poem is objective.

Upon the subject of caged birds Mr. Hudson of course is thoroughly sound. He is not a sentimentalist. He shoots birds, he eats birds; he even recommends us to take our guns out against the wood-pigeon, first because it is horribly destructive, and next because it is highly palatable; but to cage a lark, to cage a thrush! . . . is there a cruelty quite like it?

> "A robin redbreast in a cage,
> Puts all heaven in a rage."

Thus sang Blake, and sang not in vain; for such lines as those and such protests as Mr. Hudson's do gradually have an effect. The sight of these wild aerial creatures pent in their few inches of wire prison is less common than it was, even in my memory.

Mr. Hudson's charming pages are illustrated by Mr. Detmold's delicate and precise drawings in colour. Mr. Detmold, as we know, has not studied the Japanese in vain. We look forward to seeing the set of his nature pictures promised by Messrs. Dent. Writer and illustrator are perhaps not ideally mated, as Mr. Hudson is as natural and easy in manner as Mr. Detmold is sedulously fanciful; however, the whole volume is excellently produced and will delight every one that is fortunate enough to possess it.

GEORGE SAMPSON.

* "Birds in Town and Village." By W. H. Hudson. With Pictures in Colour by E. J. Detmold. 10s. 6d. net. (Dent.)

"FOUL-WEATHER JACK."*

Byron had a grandsire who sailed and fought in such a perpetual atmosphere of storm and conflict that his crews all dubbed him "Foul-weather Jack." One is loath to reduce a tolerable enthymeme into a flat and uninspiring

* "Memories." By Admiral-of-the-Fleet Lord Fisher. £1 1s. net. (Hodder.)

syllogism, but there are parallels with Admiral Byron somewhere, and Lord Fisher will appreciate them. So must every one who reads this gusty book. Of late these crowding memoirs of our warriors, dry and wet, have lost much of their virtue by prior promulgation in the daily papers, and though they afford us a kind of relief from the dust and fume of the leader columns, they drag each other down to the controversial arena and, as Wendell Holmes said, you can hardly enter a dispute without descending to the level of your adversary. Heat, in consequence, takes on the look of hatred, and admissions furnish awkward headlines. To read the extracts which have appeared of late from this quaint autobiography of Lord Fisher's, you might imagine he had turned to Hyde Park oratory or electioneering, and although the public may be grateful for this daily reminder of his picturesque and breezy style, it did more or less injustice to his case. What seemed noisy and jerky and ill-advised, works out to more natural advantage in a book which we all knew would be characteristic or it would be nothing. The author confesses readily enough that it has been dictated rather than written, and robust dictation is the 'Ercles vein that suits him best. Moreover, he describes it as a "conversation book, not a classic," and here again we cannot help but profoundly agree. Yet there is conversation and conversation. One has even heard of railway men chatting by means of fog-signals, and at the game of detonation Lord Fisher wins. We also remember a famous remark of Lord Justice Hannen's to an apologetic witness when he said there were not many men who would care to cross swords with Mr. Gladstone. Lord Fisher is a man with an anecdotal mind, and again he will comprehend the rough idea. In these pages he certainly has the talk all his own way and, thank goodness, the talk is not all politics.

Samuel Pepys in his "Memoires of the Royal Navie" rejoices at the outset that when he entered office as Secretary to the Admiralty by letters patent, the fleet had been lately overhauled by Parliament. A deal of water has flowed under Westminster Bridge since then. It is the tussle between service men and civilians which made the marrow of Lord Beresford's recollections a few years ago, and it is never far from the present author's mind. If he finds it hard to suffer politicians gladly, they seem to have laboured under equal disadvantage in their dealings with him; and if he is rough on some of his colleagues, there are many whom he mentions with unbounded praise. Anyhow, so long as free speech is the motto of this bull-dog race, we must let men like the author be metaphoric and outspoken or they must perish.

If there is anybody to "sack," it is certainly not Lord Fisher. It is safe to say that when the flight of time has banished all the problems here discussed in his more serious chapters, the book will survive as the frank expression of an amazing sample of the British seaman. It affords the best stories we know of King Edward, and it presents a long gallery of notables in just the attitudes to suit—King Alfonso popping chocolate into the author's mouth, and clasping him with an effusive cry of "My darling!"; Moltke calmly reading Miss Braddon in the original; the ex-Kaiser venting his baffled wrath at our Navy; a Russian princess learning to waltz with Lord Fisher for tutor; Lord Rothschild offering him a big commercial appointment; Lord Kelvin listening with patience to a middy's views on science; Sir Hiram Maxim burying himself into an orange so that he emerged like a case of jaundice; W. T. Stead hanging on to an out-thrust pole from a porthole so as to capture a newspaper "scoop"; Gladstone prophesying that science one day will read from the walls whatever has been said inside them; and more astonishing than all, Lord Fisher himself attending a Peace Conference! The more exalted personage we are promised in a chapter heading eludes us, and we can only conjecture that he fell under the blue pencil; at any rate more than one disappointed reader will scrawl at the end of the book—"Puzzle: Find the Pope!"

One good story shows the author's powers as a raconteur. It tells of a man on a non-stop train across America who got it halted for no apparent right, and the railway director aboard was angry to see a lady get off. He tackled the presumptuous man later and said, "What excuse have you got? I wouldn't have done it for my own wife!" The answer he got from the delinquent was "No more would I." But this is only one of a string of amusing narratives, either of fact or fancy, and the yarns Lord Fisher tells of the service help to explain why he rose in it. Throughout, he remains a bustling, inventive, impulsive personality, illogical to a fault, exclamatory always, tactful sometimes, and dogged to the death. Only one man seems ever to have tamed him—and that was King Edward—but even he lost patience on occasion; and to do him justice, Lord Fisher is never above telling a story against himself. We are left with the indelible impression of an artless, engaging, and self-revealing book if ever there was one.

J. P. COLLINS.

NEW NOVELS.*

"My Ántonia" is a narrative-study, plain, direct, more subtle in its simplicity than one realises at first touch, of western prairie life in the differing phases that centre round the pioneer farm, the evolving town, and the still newer university. Its broad-flowing prairie atmosphere is peculiarly alive; its scenes are painted by a *plein-air* artist who has felt the beauty of the red grass, the "golden ribbons" of sunflowers, the white and gold cotton-woods; the spite of the snowstorm, "simply spilled out of heaven, like thousands of feather-beds being emptied"; the prairie spring, "the throbs of it, the light restlessness, the vital essence of it everywhere; in the sky, in the swift clouds, in the pale sunshine, and in the warm, high wind."

Against this background move and develop the lives of Jim Burden, the young autobiographer, Bohemian Ántonia herself, the firmly drawn central figure, and their group of friends, Scandinavian, Russian and American. The author's rigid abstinence from high colour and overemphasis lends strong actuality to the happenings; her aim, well achieved, is not to thrill or startle, but calmly and quietly to convince. Perhaps the stage is a thought overcrowded, yet each character is conscientiously, if somewhat briefly, sketched in. The Shimerda group stands out well, the ingenuous Lena Linguard—negative, simple, cleverly projected in half-tones—is a notable success. The few emotional scenes, such as the Russian Pavel's wolf-story and Mrs. Steavens's acceptance of Ántonia's pathetic mishap, show power. The book will be found highly informing to those who may wish to learn the true inwardness of existence on the Nebraska prairies.

Miss Peterson opens her story, "The Sword-Points of Love," on a note of lightness and frivolity, of a heartless girl's cruelty to a lover. It seems that the elfin, faun-faced Mavis, her heroine, is too trivial, too little of a real human entity to evolve more than a trickle of interest. But ere long the little creature, half forced into marriage by a rough planter from the wilds of Uganda, begins to pluck lightly at your sympathy. Before they reach their home she has taken a firmer hold by blazing out fierily against her captor's brutality, and from that moment onwards you follow her suffering course with poignant interest and compassion. Brooding about the house and plantation is an atmosphere not merely of squalor, but of cruelty and terror. The husband develops from a merely roughish, into a sheerly intolerable brute. The wretchedness of the lonely girl, shut up in the wilderness with this ruffian, forced to witness savage floggings of the natives, to hold back her hatred in the interest of her unborn son, creates a situation of great emotional poignancy. The "Uganda-rotted" tyrant is alive and actual enough to stir one's feelings acutely. One longs for his death, and

* "My Ántonia." By Willa S. Cather. (William Heinemann.)—"The Sword-Points of Love." By Margaret Peterson. (Hurst & Blackett.)—"Desire and Delight." By F. E. Penny. (Chatto & Windus.)—"Many There Be." By O. H. Sherrard. (Sidgwick & Jackson.)

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when it comes—but (not to give away the story) enough that it is a well-managed, effective climax. A conventional happy ending to the drama would have been out of the picture; that given by the author is psychologically right and satisfying.

In "Desire and Delight" Mrs. Penny gives us at once a fascinating tale and a series of sumptuous Indian pictures. As a rule an Arabian Nights setting to a story involves some overstraining of the plausibilities; but when, as here, its scene is the palace of an ancient and noble Mohammedan family, the traditional habitat of darksome intrigue, picturesque romance rings true and fairly captures the imagination. Planted in this milieu, a charming English girl of the V.A.D., estranged from her husband through no real fault on either side, plays out a triumphant part. "Nurse Mary" is in charge of Captain Gabriel-u-deen, the real Shahzada, the headship of whose family has been usurped by an elder brother. Michael Sahib, the usurper, backed by his wife and swarming hareem, plots hard and riskily to keep Gabriel from the arms of his young bride. Espionage, intrigues and adventures—the affair of the man-eating tiger and the "Mahratta claws" being especially effective—immesh Gabriel and his nurse protectors. "Nurse Mary" (rightly Rosemary Edenthorpe) pits her woman's wit and courage against the cunning of the hareem gang; playing upon their superstition she poses as a White Witch, the Ammah of the Droog, and finally beats them at their own game. Behind this thrilling romantic drama runs the sub-tale of her restoration to the high-minded Colonel Edenthorpe. The light comedy of Jimmy Dumbarton's love affair with Nurse Ida Frome makes a pleasant foil to the more serious main thesis of a vivid and stirring novel.

The scene of "Many There Be" is laid largely at Rochester, the leading figures in the earlier stages of the story being a devoted couple, Major Fitzstartin and his beautiful wife. The latter has a mystery in her past which a villainous Jew, Haggenhop, and his tool, Snuffling, hope to exploit. The wife dies pathetically after giving birth to a daughter, Lena, who develops into a pretty and pleasing heroine, beloved by the over-modest but likeable youth, Arthur Meggs. Arthur, going up to town in search of a career, comes into contact with a humorous but parasitic uncle, Jaspar Jickling, genial old maids, socialistic landlords, and others of whom character studies are given. Later the scene shifts to the Utopia designed and run by Mr. Gumthwack. Here motor-car and other adventures and complications ensue, involving the introduction of another character who, telling his story in full, discloses the secret of Mrs. Fitzstartin's mystery. The Haggenhop-Snuffling affair is further developed and comes to a dramatic climax in a murder scene. Lena eventually falls to the stronger, more effective lover, and the conclusion is in the main idyllic and happy. Perhaps the most sympathetic characters in the book are those of young Arthur, his sensible and lovable mother, Mrs. Meggs, and the tender-hearted old Jobbins, who loses a beloved wife, and is deserted by a beloved but worthless son.

HAROLD VALLINGS.

MEN AND MANNER IN PARLIAMENT.*

This book appeared in 1874, anonymously, and previously in serial form in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, where it entertained and instructed no less a figure than Dr. Woodrow Wilson, who was then studying at Princeton University. So indebted was the future President of the United States to Sir Henry Lucy that he describes him still as "one of my instructors." With such a benediction, it behoves us to examine this resurrected volume with some reverence. It is a graphic picture of the Parliament of 1874, when Disraeli was "in," and Gladstone was "out" after six years of office. Gladstone had decided to dissolve Parliament and appeal to the country for a new lease of life for the Liberal party. He was trounced at the election, and Disraeli returned to power with a thumping majority. Gladstone, in a well-known letter to Lord Granville, announced his intention of retiring from the leadership of the Liberal party, saying that he could not contemplate any unlimited extension of active political service. No one, least of all Mr. Gladstone himself, foresaw then that he was destined to hold the premiership three more times. When Sir Henry Lucy wrote these journalistic sketches, the Liberal party was in the doldrums, the leadership of the opposition was in commission, as Disraeli said, and no one knew from day to day who would act as its spokesman.

"The new session" (1874), wrote Sir Wilfred Lawson in his diary, "was interesting. The two most exciting matters with which it dealt were alterations in the Laws of the Established Liquor Trade and of the Established Church—a Spiritual and Spirituous Session it might be called." He referred also to "the almost holy calm" which prevailed in Parliament now that the Conservatives had it all their own way. On this background of holy calm Sir Henry Lucy, in 1874, drew his character studies of the politicians who bulked large in the public eye of the day. "All, all are gone, the old familiar faces," bewails the author. To this generation, however, the bitter truth is that most of the figures who strutted about on the stage in the Parliament of 1874 are either entirely unknown or merely politely remembered. It is not acceptable yet to admit that you have never heard of Gladstone and Disraeli, but who is fearful of confessing ignorance of poor Mr. Cross, Home Secretary in Disraeli's cabinet? Here is a delightful picture of him, and one that seems so very familiar to us, drawn by our author:

> "Mr. Cross's speaking has not improved in point of style since he found a seat on the Treasury Bench. A tendency to prolixity has developed itself in an alarming manner, the right hon. gentleman evidently thinking that it is incumbent upon a Home Secretary to expand into a speech what a private member might have said in a sentence. . . . This is possibly owing to the temporary existence of the intense delight which a good, plain man experiences in finding himself suddenly and unexpectedly in the position of Her Majesty's Chief Secretary of State for the Home Department."

And yet Mr. Cross achieved fame in his day, for, according to Sir Wilfred Lawson (a mine of interesting information on these bygone times), he became the theme of a popular chorus:

> "For he's a jolly good fellow,
> Whatever the Radicals think:
> For he's shortened the hours of labour,
> And lengthened the hours of drink."

Sir Henry Lucy writes somewhere in this book that it is much more true that every member of Parliament has hid away in his desk the portfolio of the premier, than that every soldier carries in his knapsack the baton of a field-marshal. It is even truer, perhaps, in spite of all cheap sneers at the "talking-shop," that every ambitious young man (or young woman, presumably) figuring in school and university debating societies, local councils, trade unions, and what not, dreams of that intoxicating day when his name is placed at the top of the poll, and his exhausted body on the burly shoulders of his triumphant supporters. Who has not looked down from the fastness of the Strangers' Gallery, and beheld the strange spectacle below, without sharing Mr. Lloyd George's reported feelings in early life, and dreamed of dominating that assembly? Sir Henry Lucy brings all that scene to the fireside, and we find ourselves murmuring:

> "Say, shall my little barque attendant sail,
> Pursue the triumph and partake the gale?"

Although this book has seen the light of day before, and deals with a not particularly vital session of Parliament, there is much that is extremely entertaining in it. Politicians, whether inside the House or out of it, should ponder deeply over it. They may learn wisdom, at least, from the faithful portrayal of others' errors. Parties with overpowering majorities should read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest two pages in particular!

IVOR NICHOLSON.

* "Men and Manner in Parliament." By Sir Henry Lucy. 10s. 6d. net. (Fisher Unwin.)

Daisy Ashford

R.J.SWAN,

LIZA LEHMANN'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY.*

"The Life of Liza Lehmann," written by herself, depicts the distinguished musical composer as she must have been known to her intimates: it is gracious, kindly, sympathetic and modest in tone, and it is marked by a welcome sense of fun and of humour. Most pleasant feature of all it is reticent. Conceived originally, so we may imagine, as a memoir of her career put together for the benefit of her two dearly-loved sons, one of whom unfortunately fell in the war, it is planned on a befitting scale, running to less than 230 pages; and, while it contains many amusing anecdotes of celebrities dead and alive, it is marked by a rare tact and taste when it refers to the author's friends and relatives. By which we mean that in cases in which the public has no right to look for confidences from Liza Lehmann, they are wisely denied. Here can be found no "chatter about Shelley," no frank and breezy domestic revelations *à la* Samuel Butler. These exclusions, however, have the air of being natural rather than deliberate: they are the involuntary effect of and tribute to good breeding; for on all fitting occasions the autobiographer is almost artless in the simplicity in which she tells her story and in the friendly fashion in which she takes her audience into her confidence. Granddaughter, on the maternal side, of Robert Chambers of Edinburgh, Liza Lehmann received her earliest education at a day school kept by two sisters of John Leech. Her first singing lessons were given her by Madame Goldschmidt (Jenny Lind) whom she describes as a stern and unrelenting Puritan and who, judged by a story told of her and of her Italian page—"You see that boy? I am trying to conquer myself, trying to *bear* with him. But he is a *Roman Catholic!*"—seems to have received a double dose of early Victorian intolerance. For nine years Liza Lehmann was a singer. Clara Schumann helped to train her voice; Verdi entertained her to supper at Genoa; Rubinstein asked her to sing for him; but Brahms neglected to make a similar request, taking no interest whatever in the "English miss," an insult which his victim has avenged by telling how one morning at breakfast this very Teutonic personage gobbled up a whole tin of sardines and drank the oil at a draught! Nor did the "English miss," at her first visit to the Bayreuth Festival, conceive a much higher opinion of a greater German composer: "Some quality inherent in Wagner's music—I am not sure that I should be wrong in describing it as an overwhelming sensuality—leaves me, however much I may have been carried away at the moment, with a sense of mental nausea." In 1894 Liza Lehmann married Mr. Herbert Bedford, now Captain Bedford, R.N.V.R., and "abandoned the concert platform without a sigh of regret." But she was not destined to abandon the music she loved so much. For her husband, like herself ("We were fortunate in having every taste in common") was devoted to music and to painting. ("As regards composition," she confesses, "I have certainly learnt as much, if not more, from him than from any other source.") He it was who suggested to her that she should set the stanzas of the "Rubáiyát" to music—hence the origin of "In a Persian Garden"; and quaintly enough, it was her brother-in-law, Mr. Edward Heron Allen, who, having become a Persian scholar, made those literal translations of Omar which have demonstrated so clearly how much more faithful a version of his great original the English poet has fashioned than the earlier admirers of the "Rubáiyát" had deemed possible. (That delightful volume of Mr. Allen's "chastely" bound in white and gold must be getting rather rare nowadays!) We should like to dwell on what Liza Lehmann says about the circumstances of the composition of "The Daisy Chain" and of the "Nonsense Songs," and of how her two light operas, "Sergeant Brue" and "The Vicar of Wakefield," came into being. We should like to quote from the press notices she received when she was touring America with a concert party which sang her own compositions. We should like to put on record her tribute of affection to that shyest, proudest and most beautiful of animals, the Persian cat. But we have already overstepped the limits of the space allotted to us and we can only recommend our readers in such space as may still be at our disposal, by no means to overlook this delightful record of a musician who was at once a great artist and a charming woman.

LEWIS BETTANY.

* "The Life of Liza Lehmann." By Herself. 10s. 6d. net. (Fisher Unwin.)

Photo by Violet Blaiklock. **Liza Lehmann, 1913.**
From "The Life of Liza Lehmann" (Fisher Unwin).

LOVE AND POLITICS.*

With all the skill of a practised hand, the author of many well varied romances has in this story set a thoroughly interesting tale against the political background of those days in which the Corn Laws were repealed under the threatening spectre of famine. Though he has evidently studied his period with close care and interest, he has never allowed merely temporary details to interfere with the broader human aspects of his story, which is mainly concerned with one young woman, her kin and her loves.

It was certainly by a curious route that Mary Audley reached the charming Gatehouse attached to the derelict Great House, and the care of her uncle. That uncle, John Audley, was obsessed by the idea that he was the genuine Lord Audley, though the courts, wanting documentary evidence of a certain tradition on which his claim was based, had decided against him. It has been a chance meeting with Lord Audley in Paris that brings Mary to her uncle's house, and she not unnaturally takes a warm interest in the young man who has been the means of removing her from the position of governess to the peace and comfort of the Gatehouse. That warm interest grows, and as Lord Audley has been struck from the first the sentimental reader sees, as he thinks, the end in the beginning. But he reckons without Mr. Peter Basset. And here it may be said that readers may well feel something of a grudge against the novelist for introducing us to Mr. Peter Basset in circumstances so unfavourable to his making a good impression. It is true that we are given early indications that there is to be something of rivalry

* "The Great House." By Stanley J. Weyman. 7s. net. (Murray.)

between the taciturn and sombre Peter and the glib and debonair Lord Audley, but the chances in such rivalry seem small, for some strange reason, to the man who is first brought on the scene only to be hurried off under the threat of *mal de mer*!

Lord Audley, whose title to the title has been vindicated in the courts, is unfortunately not possessed of means in accordance with his position. His needs point to marriage with an heiress, but there is ever in the back of his mind the feeling that that missing link of evidence may be discovered which will hand the title over to John Audley. Should such an untoward event occur Mary would be the next heir. Thus it is that he comes to be engaged to that charming damsel more from the conscious dictates of policy on his side and the mistaken sense of gratitude on hers, than from real love. Public affairs come to take a more prominent part in the romance towards the close, when events were moving to that change of policy on the part of Sir Robert Peel which set the whole world agog; and public affairs have something of a clarifying effect upon the characters of some of the small group of people in whose inter-relations Mr. Weyman has got our interests closely absorbed. The Riddsley election is, it may confidently be asserted, a notable addition to the series of elections described in fiction, and will bear comparison with any for vigour and verisimilitude as well as for the important part which it plays in the development of the heroine's romance. The election is the testing time of the rivals.

It is a good story, well told, and with some very clever characterisation, more particularly perhaps in those subsidiary characters whose reality goes so far to give actuality to a romance.

WALTER JERROLD.

JOYCE KILMER'S POEMS.

Joyce Kilmer was a journalist as well as a poet; but he was a poet turned journalist, consequently you seldom find the journalist in his poetry, but often find the poet in his journalism. He was a mystic with a sense of humour; a practical man of affairs with the truest passion for romance; he reconciled a keen business instinct with an exquisite feeling for beauty, and so far subdued his surroundings, instead of being subdued by them, that he could draw his highest inspiration from the simplest or commonest things in the everyday life that he knew, find all the magic of earth in his own door-yard, and all heaven in a New York by-way.

Born in New Jersey, in 1886, he was married and had one son when he threw up school teaching and went to New York to enter upon a journalistic career. He started with no privileges; nobody paved the way for him; he had nothing to rely upon but his own ability and industry and, happily, he had enough of both to carry him through. Any opening that offered he was ready to fill, and so in succession became editor of a journal devoted to horses, of which he knew nothing; salesman in Scribner's book store; assistant editor of a standard dictionary, and then literary editor of *The Churchman*. Meanwhile he had been contributing verse and prose to a good many papers, and before long his reviews had become a popular feature in two or three of the weeklies and monthlies, and he had earned a considerable reputation as a poet and essayist of real charm and distinction.

These two volumes of his poems, essays and letters* are prefaced with a very admirable Memoir by Robert Cortes Holliday, one of Kilmer's journalistic colleagues and most intimate friends. It is admirable alike as a biography, as á frank, revealing character-study and as a discriminating criticism of Kilmer's work. Mr. Holliday is right in saying it is the felicity of his pages that they cannot be dull, or sad; for Kilmer was too intensely alive, too intensely human, and too full of the joy of life for anything written of him not to be interesting and not to be vital with something of his own buoyant, radiant personality. His days of struggle behind him, he emerged in 1913 as what he called "a hard newspaper man," and was a highly successful special writer for the *New York Sunday Times*, and in great demand as a lecturer and reader of his own poems, when America declared war on Germany, and he at once threw up everything to enlist. He went to France as a private in the 165th U.S.A. Infantry; was presently made a sergeant; and on the 30th July last year was killed in action near Ourcq.

One thing that I find very attractive in him is that "the better poet Kilmer became the less like a poet he acted"; he had no showy eccentricities, no picturesque pose; no effeminate self-indulgences. He was essentially a masculine, business person, with a wife and family to support, and he shouldered his responsibilities cheerfully and capably. From his poems you may gather that to his thinking the poet should be not less but more of a man than others, and he puts the fineness and robust healthfulness of that philosophy into his scathing lines "To Certain Poets":

> ". . . You little poets mincing there
> With women's hearts and women's hair!
>
> "How sick Dan Chaucer's ghost must be
> To hear you lisp of 'Poesie'! . . .
>
> "This thing alone you have achieved:
> Because of you, it is believed
>
> "That all who earn their bread by rhyme
> Are like yourselves, exuding slime.
>
> "Take up your needles, drop your pen,
> And leave the poet's craft to men!"

The same good scorn is in his stanzas "To a Young Poet Who Killed Himself"; but though this fiercely satirical note is characteristic of him, it is not his chief characteristic. It is not so entirely like himself as are the delightful playfulness and tenderness in his verses about children; the charm of fancy and feeling in his love lyrics, "For Aline"; or the whimsical pathos of such poems as "Servant Girl and Grocer's Boy" and "Delicatessen." Widely different as they are in theme, his poems are bound each to each by the sensitive love of humanity, the quiet beauty of imagination and emotion, the gracious, forceful personality that run through them all, and from the haunting music of his song of the road, "Roofs," the wistfulness of "War-time Christmas," the deep poignancy of "Rouge Bouquet" and "Prayer of a Soldier in France," two of the few poems he wrote on active service, I still come back to "Delicatessen" as not the best but perhaps the most peculiarly characteristic thing he ever wrote. It merely pictures an ordinary delicatessen store and the worried little man who serves his meats, fruits, spices, pickles, olives, tea to all comers, and it finds a heart of poetry in these unideal surroundings where the shopman's soul is confined by his counters:

> "Yet—in a room above the store
> There is a woman—and a child
> Pattered just now across the floor;
> The shopman looked at him and smiled.
>
> "For once he thrilled with high romance
> And tuned to love his eager voice.
> Like any cavalier of France
> He wooed the maiden of his choice. . . .
>
> "And when the long day's work is done
> (How slow the leaden minutes ran!)
> Home, with his wife and little son,
> He is no huckster, but a man! . . .
>
> "He decks his window artfully,
> He haggles over paltry sums.
> In this strange field his war must be
> And by such blows his triumph comes.
>
> "What if no trumpet sounds to call
> His armed legions to his side?
> What if to no ancestral hall
> He comes in all a victor's pride?

* "Joyce Kilmer." Edited by Robert Cortes Holliday. Vol. I.: "Memoir and Poems." Vol. II.: "Prose Works." 12s. net. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

"The scene shall never fit the deed.
Grotesquely wonders come to pass.
The fool shall mount an Arab steed
And Jesus ride upon an ass.

"This man has home and child and wife
And battle set for every day.
This man has God and love and life;
These stand, all else shall pass away.

"O Carpenter of Nazareth,
Whose mother was a village maid,
Shall we, Thy children, blow our breath
In scorn on any humble trade?

"Have pity on our foolishness
And give us eyes, that we may see
Beneath the shopman's clumsy dress
The splendour of humanity."

I cannot improve on Father Daly's description of Kilmer's verse as "simple and direct, yet not without subtle magic," it "seems artlessly naïve, yet it possesses deep undercurrents of masculine and forceful thought; it is ethical in its seriousness, and yet as playful and light-hearted as sunlight and shadows under summer oaks"; nor on what Cecil Chesterton, who knew him, has said of Kilmer himself: "He was the kind of man who would have disliked and despised the sort of self-analysis in which some poets have delighted. Behind a breezy and boyish sort of vanity—the healthy kind of vanity that is pleased when it pleases others—he had humility and simplicity in his soul. That is why his mysticism never plunged into morbidity, as Poe's did, but set itself to scale the skies."

A. D.

AS A TALE THAT IS TOLD.*

Mr. Macdonald's reminiscences tempt one to challenge the old Greek saying, "Call no man happy till he is dead." He is living still, unvexed by anything more serious than the moral obliquities of his poultry, and for years he seems to have enjoyed

"That which should accompany old age,
As honour, love, obedience, troops of friends."

A charming atmosphere fills these pages of reminiscences, extending over seventy years. They do not breathe any resentful spirit or any interest in controversies, such as that over Hugh Price Hughes, in which the author's feelings must have been stirred. Mr. Macdonald remembers what is pleasant to remember, not ignoring the troubles and trials, but dwelling on the brighter side as a rule.

This is the tale of a Wesleyan Methodist, who has been successively minister, professor of theology, secretary to the Missionary Society, and President of the Conference. The curious thing is that he had no special training for the ministry. He was studying at Owens College, Manchester, when as a lad of twenty he was unexpectedly recommended as a candidate for the ministry. It was a surprise to his father, who presided over the meeting of Circuit, and to himself. But it was one of these sudden turns which prove providential. He read widely in literature and theology, to make up for his lack of special education. And family connexions brought him into touch with circles of stimulus. One sister married Burne Jones, another Poynter, the late President of the Academy, a third Mr. Alfred Baldwin, M.P., and a fourth an Anglo-Indian, John Lockwood Kipling. "It was after a day that a number of us spent together at Rudyard Lake," he writes of this sister, "that they became engaged." All this tells its own tale. These gifted women and their new interests evidently meant an education itself for Mr. Macdonald. There is no self-praise in this book, and the author is finely scrupulous about trading upon his distinguished relatives. But we see his own career opening up steadily and honourably; we infer that he had gifts of tact and patience, breadth of mind, and the power for getting on with people of most kinds. Also, he has had a rare capacity for friendship. "As regards both disposition towards friendship and opportunities of cultivating it, I reckon myself fortunate," he remarks, and then adds the interesting fact, "During a great part of my life many of my closest friendships were with persons older than myself."

Mr. Macdonald discusses the effect of the itinerant system of the ministry upon family life. He thinks that it prevents any strong local attachments, but on the other hand that it tends to drive a family back upon itself. He has also some shrewd reflections upon the difficulties of church union, which are unwritten, yet none the less real. His book contains passages of this kind that come with weight from a man of his long experience.

He also enlivens his pages with humorous tales and pleasant recollections. One of his bright little sisters came down to breakfast one day rather irritable, and explained her mood by declaring, "Oh, I have had a bad dream! I dreamt that I was Antichrist, and had my ears boxed with sheet-lightning for my impudence." Another story may be quoted, in conclusion. After preaching at St. Louis, the author was at breakfast in his hotel, when a negro waiter whispered in his ear,

"I heard you preach last night, sah; very good sermon, sah; I couldn't have preached dat sermon if I'd stopped on my knees till de day of doom, sah."

"Possibly not," said I, "but I have no doubt you can do many things that I cannot do."

"Yes, sah, I can, sah," was his quick reply. "I can stand at de door ob de dining-room when de gentlemen come in to dinner, and take der hats, fifty hundred ob dem, and when dey go out again I gib every gentleman his own hat, make no mistake, sah."

"Well," said I, "I could not do that."

"No, sah, you couldn't," he said proudly, and yet kindly that I might not feel discouraged, "you couldn't."

"How do you manage it?" said I.

"*Imagination, sah!*" was his reply; "I look at de empty hats when I've put dem on de shelf till I see de faces come under 'em.'"

We should like to have heard more about A. J. Scott, the brilliant man who flits through the pages of biographies about the middle of last century, the friend of Irving, the man who never fulfilled all the promise and hopes that attached to his career. He had ceased to be head of Owens College when Mr. Macdonald entered, but he was still teaching. Mr. Macdonald speaks of his extraordinary influence over the students. But he remains enigmatic.

Mr. Macdonald has been a bookman all his life, and it is not inappropriate here to cite his plea for literary criticism.

"There are those, I am aware, who hardly consider it a respectable department of literature. 'Read books,' they say, 'the great books, especially, but don't read books about books.' If that means anything it means read Shakespeare, but don't read Coleridge and Hazlitt on Shakespeare, or Dr. Furnivall, or Sidney Lee, or Swinburne, or Dowden, or Professor Raleigh. That is, accept no help from those whose genius, learning, and long devotion to the study of Shakespeare fit them to be the guides of those who would travel in his realms of gold."

JAMES MOFFATT.

* "As a Tale That Is Told: Recollections of Many Years." By Frederic W. Macdonald. 10s. 6d. net. (Cassell.)

WAR MEMORIES, 1914-1918.*

For some time to come our leisure will be fully occupied if we are to read all the various works by the leading actors, soldiers and politicians, of the world war. Ludendorff's was the first to be published by one of our former enemies, and Von Tirpitz has followed "close upon." The next to appear are Count Czerny's and Von Bethmann-Hollweg's, each at one time Chancellor of his country. More doubtless will follow. Ludendorff's justification for the part his country took in beginning the war is that it was imposed upon Germany as a defensive war against the Entente. Evidence is against such a plea; whether Russia, France and England were in any way—even in the least degree—contributory, will be for the future judicially to decide. Here and there in the book its author throws some interesting sidelights on the character of the Kaiser, and one can

* "My War Memories, 1914–1918." By General Ludendorff, 34s. net. (Hutchinson.)

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but conjecture what would have been his attitude to the war if he had not been so completely under the domination of his military advisers. The following extract suggests much thought:

"There were many things which formed a barrier between me and His Majesty; our characters were too different. He was my Imperial Master, and I served him and my country in his person, with the most loyal devotion . . . [he] loved his soldiers, desired only the best for his country and people, and whose whole inmost nature was averse to war—a man whose nature was typical of the German of post-Bismarckian times. The monarch on whom such enormous responsibility lay did not, like his Imperial grandfather, find men like Roon and Bismarck, who were resolved in times of stress to demand from the country everything needed for the prosecution of the war. That was what proved fatal to the Emperor and the country in this war."

This view would seem to refer, not to the Kaiser's attitude before the war, but to his lack of action, when the war was going against Germany, in not compelling the nation to a more mighty effort. Infinitely more could have been done, so Ludendorff thought, by the people if only they were directed by the proper persons. It is not difficult to assume who they were in whom such powers were centred. He was persistently urging the Chancellor that more and still more should be done to avert disaster. But the people were getting tired, disappointed and disillusioned. They had been promised an early end of hostilities, of course in their favour, and at the beginning of the war they believed it, so ingrained in them was their confidence in the strength and perfection of their mighty army. The scheme for the defeat of their enemies seemed to promise success. France was to be first conquered before Russia was ready, and to ensure it their guarantee of the neutrality of Belgium was to be ignored. Then, having accomplished their task in the West, they were to turn on Russia. But Belgium, unfortunately for their best-laid plans, upset their calculations, and much precious time was lost in overcoming that little nation. Then, when effort after effort was ineffectual, the poor deluded German people were fed on promises which never or seldom became facts. "If it be not now, yet it will come: the readiness is all." That seemed a poor consolation when their hopes had been raised to such a pitch of expectation. Ludendorff's plaint was that the people could, should and ought to be made to do more. It was reported that he was desirous of becoming a dictator, but this he denied. There is no doubt if he had been withdrawn from his military duties at the front, and sent to Berlin, many things would have altered. His forceful personality would have made itself felt there as it did in the field.

In August, 1916, after the Russian success against Austria and the first British and French offensive, Hindenburg, who had up to that date been Commander-in-Chief in the East with Ludendorff as his Chief of Staff, was appointed Chief of the Staff of the Field Army, and the latter Second Chief. This change of command was introduced in order that the war might be won. Ludendorff was undoubtedly the more able soldier, and it is to his credit that he did everything possible to win the war for his country. Full of boundless energy, conscious of the tremendous responsibility placed on his shoulders and of the confidence of the nation and army in his skill, he worked zealously and ceaselessly for the defeat of his opponents. And he believed or deluded himself into believing in the justice of his cause. His fall was due to his having signed along with Hindenburg an order to the army urging further resistance after the government had decided to enter into armistice negotiations. This order was not issued to the troops, but its contents leaked out. It seems strange that Hindenburg should not have been made to share in his fall, for the latter was the first to sign the order, and Ludendorff's signature was appended through a misapprehension. But apparently Hindenburg was not so unpopular with the civil authorities as was Ludendorff. Ludendorff's work is the most important work on the war which has yet appeared, and is of considerable historical value. It is engrossingly interesting, well written and supplied with a series of large folding maps and sketch maps in the text, all of which are really useful. The only drawback to them is that they (the folding maps) are not detached, as they should have been, and placed in a pocket at the end of the work, otherwise it means in order to follow the battles easily that they have to be cut out.

S. BUTTERWORTH.

CHRIST, ST. FRANCIS AND TO-DAY.*

The main thesis of Mr. Coulton's new and at least ingenious work is that if all Franciscan documents written within twenty years of the death of St. Francis of Assisi were out of existence and memory, and were those remaining as few and rare as early Christian memorials, any attempt to infer the founder's intention from the direction in which the Order was tending at the close of its first century would misread the whole position. At that period the Franciscans were collecting great libraries, had captured the universities and were building noble churches, which things were in opposition to the design of St. Francis. On the basis of this analogy, Mr. Coulton inquires what support there is for assuming that the state of the Christian Church in A.D. 90 and after was that which Christ had prescribed. The general tenor of His teaching "and His attitude towards formalities of every kind" preclude any idea of sympathy with elaborate organisation. The presumption is that He did not institute the Catholic Church "even in that rudimentary form which we find in St. Ignatius—and still less the Church of mediæval development." In particular, the claims concerning the hierarchy and apostolic succession are "pious opinions," historically unprovable. The desirable thing and the plea here advanced is to leave these questions open, with all those that are like them, and find a common basis for Christian unity, it being obvious that matters of debate which have reached no settlement in 1900 years cannot be vitally essential. The motto is therefore "sink the differences" and make a fresh start. There are thousands to whom it will seem good counsel, whether practicable or not, but it is well to recognise where it may lead us. Mr. Coulton describes a Christian as one "who in his degree is a follower of Christ"—the possible degrees being infinite, and all doctrinal matters concerning the nature of Christ being obviously left open. He may be the Son of God, consubstantial with the Father and the Second Person of a Holy, Blessed and Undivided Trinity; a man of divine election in whom dwelt the Spirit of God; an historical personality or a great symbol of the way of the soul in God: I am a Christian, whichever of these alternatives I am able to take and prepared to follow. In other words, it is given to every man according as his mind shall choose: there is no rule of teaching, and the faith once delivered to the saints goes back to their keeping, having ceased to be of use among us. Any evidence from physical miracles has of course passed into the limbus; there remains only "the moral miracle" of Christianity. My point is that Mr. Coulton may be right *ex hypothesi*, even if his Franciscan parallel is a little too plausible not to conceal a trap; but if he be, it is vital to realise where we are. We are left with a so-called moral miracle, like a stone offered for bread. I am a Christian because the life and doctrine of Christ stand for the path which I must follow if I would take back my soul to God. I am not a Christian because Christianity embodies a collection of precepts which teach men how to be morally good: the world is full of these precepts, but no moral considerations have ever saved the world. We may sink the differences and the doctrines; we may find a common basis apart from doctrines and may think to carry on somehow; but if we are honest to ourselves and to others, we shall recognise that we are taking the closing in that rite of the Christian centuries which has been called the Christian Dispensation.

A. E. WAITE.

* "Christ, St. Francis and To-day." By E. G. Coulton, M.A. 10s. 6d. net. (Cambridge University Press.)

R. J. SWAN, 1919.

MR. GALSWORTHY'S SAINT.*

Mr. Galsworthy in his latest work, a novel of the war years, gives us an up-to-date picture of age aghast before the opinions and conduct of the children it has brought into the world. For the victim of such an experience, by no means uncommon nowadays, he chooses a clergyman, and presents him with a friendly, almost an affectionate sympathy. He makes him, indeed, a saint, though with the saint's asceticism, the saint's blindness to what is under his nose, the saint's inclination to be hortatory and even sometimes harsh of judgment. There is only one thing lacking for his title to be fully deserved. When the vicar's faith is attacked—as in our times and especially during the war, how could it escape being?—he is a very poor hand at stating its case. Now your conventional parson might, nay often did, find himself at a loss under the challenge, "Why does a good God permit universal carnage?" But your saint, however modern, is of a different make. He will boldly avow, "I know in Whom I have trusted"; he, like Paul the Apostle, will have some contact with the unseen, some vision of his Master, though others may call it hallucination, on which to rest his confidence. But for Edward Pierson his religion is a drug and argument is tiring and confusing. Such a man stands no chance against his two girls when, as would so many young things of to-day, they refuse to take the word of authority and claim to think for themselves. Moreover, faced with a war in which youth had to pay the heaviest price in risk and sacrifice, and young womanhood was threatened with either the baulking of all its legitimate expectations of joy and mating or else the prospect of premature widowhood, they had no taste for platitudes, and platitudes were all this gentle but obstinate priest, their father, had to offer. Their response to his tenders of hackneyed consolation differed with their fortunes. Gratian, already wedded and able to ward off death from her doctor-husband, was content with informing him that she did not believe in a future life, and could not pray. But the apple of his eye, the more passionate Noel, horrified him one day with the announcement that she was about to become an unmarried mother. The fanatic in him, of course, opposes secrecy, expects penitence and open acknowledgment, with the result that scandal is soon agog in his parish, and he has to resign his living. Both girls feel, not without reason, that they have pulled him down, but the tragedy of his career does not alter their beliefs or non-belief, and he it is who at the close of the tale is left unhappy.

* "Saint's Progress." By John Galsworthy. 7s. 6d. net. (Heinemann.)

Mr. John Galsworthy.
From a snapshot.

One's first instinct on turning the last page of the book is to protest against its main situation. Whether war-babies were a rare or a frequent development of the abnormal conditions from which we have emerged, they did not come from the class to which Mr. Galsworthy's Noel belonged. Girls of her class, no doubt, rushed into love on the briefest acquaintance and snatched at the cup of pleasure and experience with a certain desperation. There was no time to waste. But though their ears were on the alert for the sudden call that might come from France, they did not give themselves to lovers they might never see again, regardless of convention. They made sure of what happiness was possible by a more common-sense form of rashness—by an immediate plunge into matrimony. And that is how Noel would have acted and thereby saved the saint of the novel many a qualm. But too much can be made of this flaw in the book, the more so as Noel, apart from her one wild lapse, is quite true to type—the normal sheltered type of girlhood. And the rest of Mr. Galsworthy's characters are alive enough, normal enough. Who has not met such a medical man as Gratian's husband who thinks this particular world has no particular importance and will become again the nebula out of which it was formed, and by friction with other nebulæ will reform into a fresh shape, and so on *ad infinitum*? Who does not know a painter of the Belgian Lavendie's sort with his view that the universe is a limitless artist always trying to make a masterpiece, and generally failing? Who has not met a Captain Fort to whom creation stands for a long fight, a sum of conquests or defeats, and, for the matter of that, how far from rare is a Leila Pierson, the amorist, who takes advantage of such a fighter's chivalry! But the mere fact that so many of these characters can be expressed in terms of their talk opens our eyes to a peculiarity of their presentment. They are real enough but they are more or less type portraits—the man of science, the artist, the man of action, the charmer, and really Mr. Galsworthy is more interested in their ideas than in their actions. He is out not so much for telling a story as for making a survey, he wants to show us not an individual adventure, but the attitude of the whole of us, the community, as summed up in certain well-defined types, under war conditions, what we thought and felt, where we fell short, how the war caught us unawares in our creeds, our charity, our individualism—youth of course pointing the moral and bowling us out. So it is that in a single chapter he sets up medico, artist, fighter, to air their views about the universe, with youth present but indifferent, wrapt up in its own sorrows. That is a clever chapter, but it points to the weakness of the author's art. There are times when his humanitarianism, his concern for the common weal, his preoccupation with "sociology" and with abstract thought distract him from the more essential business of a novelist. And then the critic, with not a fraction of his brains or of his heart, can pick holes in his work as I have done, without perhaps feeling, as I do, unhappy over the job, however certain that what he urges has some justification.

F. G. BETTANY.

THE CASE AGAINST SPIRITUALISM.*

It is not surprising that, in these days, there should have been a very large increase in the number of those who believe in Spiritualism. During the Great Plague, wizards, diviners, fortune-tellers sprang up all over London, and the credulous flocked to consult them. The shadow of death was over the city:

> "The air was filled with farewells of the dying
> And mourning for the dead,"

and broken and bewildered by their dire experiences, people were eager to trust in those who were able, or professed to be able, to give them warnings, counsel, or

* "The Case Against Spiritualism." By Jane T. Stoddart. 5s. net. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

any hope from the unseen world into which so many of their friends had gone. And nowadays, when thousands have had their nearest and dearest suddenly taken from them in the war, there has been a natural, human longing to believe in the power of any wonder-worker who claims that he can call their spirits back from the beyond and place them, once again, in communion with them.

Usually the opponents of Spiritualism deny all its evidence and put its phenomena down to delusion or deliberate trickery. Miss Stoddart does not adopt that easy way of disposing of the subject. She has studied the history and records of Spiritualism carefully and impartially, and among much that is suspect, much that is demonstrably fraudulent, she recognises that some of its manifestations are genuine, but shows of what little value are all messages received through trance or other mediums, even when they are or may be authentically occult, how uncertain it is that they are from the spirit the inquirer thinks he is consulting, and the mental disaster that often results from pursuing experiments that the great teachers of Christianity, knowing how perilous they are, have forbidden. There is no ridicule of the follies of the séance; Miss Stoddart writes earnestly and forcefully, not as a partisan, but as an honest seeker after truth. She writes with the authority of one who has studied these matters deeply and reverently, and supports her conclusions by quoting chapter and verse, quoting them on occasion from leading thinkers in the ranks of the spiritualists themselves.

The book is at once a revelation and a warning, and should be read by all, for it throws light on those eternal mysteries in which all are concerned. Its conclusions are well considered and clear, and it says courageously many things that, particularly just now, needed to be said.

S. J.

THOMSON OF DUDDINGSTON.*

This stately volume—consisting of 568 pages—must surely contain all that can be known and all that can be said about the celebrated Scottish landscape painter, John Thomson of Duddingston. Mr. Napier has spared neither time nor labour upon a work not only eminently congenial to himself, but also of deep and abiding interest to every student of art, and to every Scot proud of the traditions of his race. It will be impossible for any future writer to furnish a more comprehensive or systematised account of Thomson. John Thomson's place in art may still be open to criticism, but it is difficult to see what more can be said than has been said, and so admirably, by his latest biographer. Mr. Napier has given years to his subject. He has written with his life's blood, as one happens to know, and what reader but must acknowledge that the final word on Thomson has been spoken? The author, it may be remarked, carries on an art business in Edinburgh. Scores of Thomson's pictures have passed through his hands. He possesses a choice little collection of his own: and he is familiar with the whereabouts and condition of practically every canvas which has come from the Duddingston brush. Hence the mass of information packed into these instructive and fascinating pages. Hence, too, the loving manner in which the task has been essayed. Yet it was no task in the ordinary sense. Only a Thomson enthusiast—one who was a really sympathetic student and interpreter of the Thomson spirit—could have produced this arresting and masterly monograph. It must revive interest in the Genius of Duddingston, and in the annals of art it should make Thomson's place more secure if indeed such security were needed.

A native of the Burns Country, son of the manse of Dailly, and himself sometime incumbent of that parish, John Thomson spent the major portion of his life as minister of Duddingston, within sight, if not wholly "within a mile of Edinburgh toon." Duddingston was then an ideal spot for the cultivation of art, and the place has been the making of several artistic reputations. It was at Dailly, however, that Thomson learned his early limning. When he "stepped westward" and found himself under the spell of Arthur's Seat, and the shining, glorious line of the Forth, and with one of the most charming lochans in Scotland lying in front of his manse windows, it is easy to understand the artistic development of the man, and the persistent eagerness with which he manipulated his palette, evoking his numerous surprising and delectable counterfeits of Nature in every one of her moods, the most august, the most serene.

There are those who assign Thomson a somewhat ordinary niche in the temple of Art. He was a parson, and it has been argued that his devotion to art was only a secondary affair, implying therefore that his artistic work also was in its nature only secondary. Such a conclusion is unwarranted: it is puerile and absurd—the offspring of prejudice and of crass unwillingness to discern those lofty intellectual and spiritual qualities inherent in one who would always be more a painter than a preacher. Accidentally, if one may say so, Thomson entered the service of the Church. He was born within a manse, but he was born an artist. And though art was not banned in the Scottish manses, it was not encouraged to any extent. Those were the days when landscape painting was in its infancy—the days, too, when whoever sought to cultivate art for its own sake, or even for filthy lucre's sake, was set, not seldom, in the category of the aimless, the lazy, the good-for-nothing. Thus young Thomson's professional career was a direct result of the parental predilection. He desired to handle the palette: his father led him the way of the pulpit. Destined to blossom into one of the greatest landscapists of his time, John Thomson's life was diverted into a different channel from that towards which his thoughts had long wandered. A not altogether uncongenial channel, notwithstanding! And it was one which nowise weakened the consciousness of unrecognised powers within him, or afterwards subtracted from the splendour of a genius which asserted itself so quickly and conspicuously. The truth is that, instead of his being an "amateur artist" because he chanced to affix the title of Reverend to his name, Thomson's work carries with it overwhelming proof of his devotion to art, and of the fact that in his own soul he gave precedence to art simply because he could not help it. He was driven to the study of Nature by the intense witchery and delight with which all natural scenes and objects made appeal to him. Nevertheless, those were merely in the case of Thomson, as they must be in the case of every true painter, experiences of something surpassingly higher, since the ultimate of art is ever a spiritual conception rather than a materialistic and sensuous one. Perhaps after all, then, Thomson's calling as a divine operated not only on his enjoyment of the natural world around him, but also on that remarkably living technique reflected in all his finest work. It inspired him in a double sense, impelling him, as Mr. Napier points out, to put into his art his own soul, his own personality, and, not least, his own Scottish heart.

It was a very happy life which Thomson lived under the shadow of those great crags rising up on the one side of his home, with the romantic little loch on the other. He had many friends—the best that Scotland—that Britain—could send to his hospitable door. Hither came Walter Scott, poetical fame at his heels. "The Lay" had just been published, and the whole country was in raptures. In the manse garden Scott wrote a fragment of "The Heart of Midlothian." The tree where he sat stood till very recently. Scott was a member of his friend's Kirk Session, a commissioner to the Presbytery and Synod, and right nobly supported Thomson in all his pious endeavours and artistic ambitions. The Great Unknown, we may be certain, was long the Well Known to the worthy pastor of Duddingston. No Scottish manse boasted so many literary, and artistic, and legal associations as Thomson's manse did. So near the capital,

* "John Thomson of Duddingston, Landscape Painter: His Life and Work, etc." By Robert W. Napier, F.R.S.A. 21 full-page illustrations. 31s. 6d. net. (Oliver & Boyd.)

Thomson was always sure of guests. He was not always "at home" however. While some had come *from* Edinburgh it was found that he had just gone *to* Edinburgh. And it was occasionally a curious reflection that none ever encountered the minister upon the road at a period when access to Duddingston was possible only by way of the Canongate and Holyrood. But Edinburgh turned out to be a newly-erected Curling House at the foot of his garden, and used frequently as a studio. "Edinburgh" was thus employed as a subterfuge for driving away undesirables, never for repelling men like William Clerk of Eldin, or Adam Fergusson, or Professor Liston, or Dr. Macknight of St. Giles, or Christopher North, or Sir David Brewster, or James Hogg, or Thomson's own excellent elder brother Thomas, the foremost antiquarian lawyer of his day—and a host besides of the country's wisest and wittiest.

So John Thomson went on with his painting and making his friendly conquests:

"He pictured the stern ocean-battered Scottish coasts, their beetling cliffs dominated by the ruins of feudal castles; the lonely inland keeps of his native country; enhancing their romantic glamour and pictorial significance. He painted the sombre hills and melancholy moors and mosses of the South and the dark forests and rugged grandeur of the North in their varying aspects of weather and season. He travelled also beyond the limits of his native land and found subjects for his brush in England, Wales and Ireland."

And his name abides, and will abide. This patriotic and learned treatise—so full of philosophic insight and exposition, and practical good sense, with its wealth of delightsome illustration, its careful and minute descriptions of the artist's work, its abundant references, its copious indexes, and throughout all, its undissembling reverence and affection for one who was a singularly "kindly Scot"—a great, good man, make it without question one of the most accomplished and finished books of the year.

W. S. CROCKETT.

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.*

Mrs. Webster's essay is a very slight contribution to a very great subject. The work is not uninteresting for all its superficiality, and it is a rather favourable example of the college theme such as the more rising intellectuals of the German universities used to attract, or hope to attract notice by. The points which Mrs. Webster wishes to make are two, that the French Revolution was engineered by dynastic intriguers, and that the control of the machine once set in motion passed into the hands of subversives, men of a purely destructive type. A good many citations support each thesis, but the immense driving power of perhaps the most colossal single movement in history is entirely unaccounted for by anything in the essay. Perhaps the most interesting section of the book is the part devoted to showing that Robespierre and others deliberately favoured civil war because they thought the country was greatly over-populated. The opinions expressed by contemporary economists were certainly very curious, and Frenchmen, apart from politics, appear to have often despaired of the fertility of France. The quotations from writers of the period with respect to Marat are strangely unanimous in representing him as a monster, and his influence over the populace seems incredible. The sketch of St. Just is not without insight, but he was an ardent constructive, and his suggested "Institutions" might well have been studied by our authoress, as she would have been thereby forced to consider how his unity of aim with the "destructive" Robespierre could have come about. The attempt to draw a parallel between the worst of the French revolutionaries and the modern Bolsheviks was perhaps to be expected; it is of course a failure, the atmosphere being wholly different. Mrs. Webster is on surer ground when essaying to appraise the results of the Revolution, and in accepting the judgment of M. Louis Madelion that the peasant alone gained by it. "He alone is happy." Subsequent authors are quoted, including Lord Ernle, to show that "the peasant has lost his happiness, and has become little more than the serf of the money lender," but the late Minister of Agriculture wrote this as long ago as 1889 and since then, determined statesmen, prominently the really great Meline, have taken rural economics in hand, and by a vast network of agricultural banks State-guaranteed, made the small cultivator once more independent.

C. KAINS-JACKSON.

* "The French Revolution: A Study in Democracy." By Nesta H. Webster. 21s. net. (Constable.)

IN THE CAGE AND ON THE BOUGH.

"Peace, cynicke, see what yonder doth approach"—seven singers, and the first of them a poet, who sang because he was a captive. The Turk got possession of the body of Mr. John Still and controlled it for three years, but he was blessed by the divine instinct of art, and the melancholy of separation from wife and child, the ghastly sense of devoured time, evoked for him a Muse. Is this a wonder to me? No, I knew a more extraordinary case. I knew the late poet-musician, Reginald Statham, and he told me how, while incarcerated under the law of England, he composed an entire volume of poetry. He had no notepaper as had Mr. Still; he had a wall to scratch on, his indomitable artistry and a memory which received his thoughts as copper receives an etcher's design. Instead of a hollow stick, such as that in which Mr. Still deposited his verses,[1] Statham had only his brain; but it was enough; he published the fruits of his spiritual industry by the enterprise of Messrs. Longman. The prison, however, is not the main fact about prison-poetry; the main fact is thought plus art, and one gladly admits that Mr. Still is a poet of considerable worth. He is uncommonly lyrical; and he is no slave to that dire mood in which William Morris's prisoner sang:

"Still strain the banner-poles
Through the wind's song,
Westward the banner rolls
Over my wrong."

No, Mr. Still is rich in interesting subject matter external to himself, though he chafes and thinks of wife and child. As 'Arry would say, "'E knows a thing or two," and tells the town of Angora that

"When all the hills that gird you round are crowned with gleaming snow,
When gorgeous colours wrap the sky in splendid robes that glow,
You lie in quiet hypocrisy, hiding the deeds you know."

There is Suvla Bay in Mr. Still's poems; there is President Wilson and a realism which allows one to feel that he reports as well as poetises. His "Loris" that "catches sleeping bulbuls by the head" deserves one of Mr. Chesterton's magnificent laughs. But let that pass, for there is so much besides irony in Mr. Still's ample volume that one reader will look to it for wisdom, another for melody, a third for story. "I failed to find the path I sought because the path was not in me": that confession surely is touched by, if not completely inspired by, true wisdom. And there is beautiful melody in his song of fairies who gather jewels "and fling a few into a poor princess's dream." As for Mr. Still's Oriental legends, Mr. Wilfrid Blunt has not held me firmer by the spell of poetic romance. If the Turk, in spite of his ugly trick of kissing his scimitar in view of captive Britons, was the cause of Mr. Still's leisure for productivity, he deserves a bookman's "thank you," if the poet will excuse it.

I do not know if Helen Granville Barker is young or old, male or female (for the late Fiona Macleod and Mr. Laurence Housman have made me sceptical of the physiology suggested by title-pages), but I do know that "Songs in

[1] "Poems in Captivity." By John Still. 7s. 6d. net. (John Lane.)

Cities and Gardens "[2] is a charming volume reflective of a rare personality and distinguished by uncommon mastery of metre. I will never quarrel with any writer of *vers libres* whose experiments result in stanzas as musical as this :

" When I was a little sober child
Sitting quiet, in a sheltered corner,
I heard someone calling ;
Then there came a sound of racing footsteps
And a wild sweet face
Looked in upon me.
I saw eyes of wonder,
Lips of magic,
And was frightened in my quiet corner
(Frightened—but enchanted).
' Tell your name to me,' at last I whispered ;
' Have you come to be a playmate ? ' "

Our poet possesses that rare instrument—an ear for quantity, and a happy faculty for uttering a fine line, so that she might if she pleased write a book of poems consisting solely of poems in solitary lines. For instance, her " Snow in May " begins thus :

" I have vanquished the law of hours
And broken the bars of Spring.
White I came to the whiter flowers."

" Whiter flowers " is a daring disparagement of snow, but " oh my ! " (as my friend Mr. Shiel exclaims in one of his poems) how a critic would exhibit his prosaicness if he were to protest against it. Here, then, we have a book of real poetry. An impetuous, passionate soul vibrates in it, but the poet's hand has been disciplined by a fastidious demand for beautiful sound, and the result is success.

The interest of the best epics of war and chivalry inevitably survives the ordeal of workmanlike translation, for the image comes through without a serious flaw ; and here the sound is of secondary importance. For this reason Pope's " Iliad " is readable, though the musician raves at his resolute indifference to Greek harmony. It necessarily follows, then, that an archaic French poem like the " Chanson de Roland " is a very fit subject for a translator who feels zest in valour, the pathos of estranged heroes, the extremes of baseness and of love. Mrs. Uloth[3] has skilfully translated and abridged this thrilling poem so rich in the rhetoric of action, and her simple but not feeble verse should be read with pleasure by many boys and by the numerous girls who like to have at hand miraculous examples of knighthood for the confounding of those who tease and woo them. Mr. Littlejohns' frontispiece is an admirable vision of a dreadful triumph.

The charm of Irish " po-uts " has not, unfortunately, settled the Irish question, but it has made all lovers of poetry feel at one time or another that there isn't an Irish question at all, but an Ireland where a noisy sham life of rhetoric and varnished shillelaghs coexists with a real life of fairies, love, melancholy, fiddling and pretty drolleries. Two things are certain : the characteristic Irish smile is lovely and the grace of naturalness belongs to the best Irish verse. That Mr. Doak[4] is not unworthy to be counted among good Irish poets is evident in this little poem, so quietly, perfectly humorous :

" One shoulder up, the other down,
His hat upon a broomstick crown,
I saw a ragged scarecrow stand,
Guarding the sown and sunlit land.

" Awhile I stood, and not a crow
Near the rich furrows dared to go ;
But when I turned away, why then
They fell to work like husbandmen."

The war fortunately has not rubbed Irishisms out of Mr. Doak's vocabulary, for in a pathetic tribute to " Johnny Durney " he says :

" Maybe a grand man fired the shot—
He laid a grander low."

Very far from conventional diatribes against the " blond beast " is such writing, but it is not unacceptable now that hatred should be scabbarded with the sword. One of Mr. Doak's best poems is " The Golden Grain " where, by the Merchant's Quay, he, merry as birds picking up grains of foreign wheat, regales himself with " a foreign thought or two." May his commonplace reader do likewise.

A fine nature able to express emotion very well, though rather meagrely supplied with spiritual information, attracts and awakens the sympathy of Mr. Hilton Young's[5] present critic. Mr. Young was on the *Iron Duke* during the war. " A smile for hate ! " sings he :

" Seek hate where hearts are festering with fear ;
The winds and waves have cleansed us from it here."

The technique of Mr. Young's sea life is the inspiration of a clever descriptive poem called " In a Turret." A bitter ballad illustrative of the luck of the slacker has a taking simplicity quite Hardyesque, and when Mr. Young thinks of dead comrades he utters a couplet not easily forgotten :

" ' Dear land of noonday light,' we said before ;
But now ' dear land of ghosts '—for evermore."

I am glad to say that a myriad experiences of the wisdom of distinguishing between a new thing and a thing done by a new man have failed to atrophy the nerve of curiosity which tingles when a stranger's work is before me. The new Sussex poet, Mr. Whiting,[6] earns at least a small excitement in one's approach to him if only by his conception of an atheist whose prayer and praise

" Are tickling rods
To awaken the gods
At one of their thousand feasts."

A short poem, " Love and the Beggar," shows a keen perception of the majesty inherent in love :

" I would beg of some one
A deep enfolding cloak
To muffle my face, and run
From thy silent master-stroke."

Mr. Whiting has still to learn that feeble thought is a hapless Icarus on any wings ; but his merits entitle him to some attention.

Though I am not psychically fitted to go through life behind a banner inscribed " Self-Denial," I admire the best poetry of Christian idealism—Crashaw's for instance ; and in reading Mr. Hall's lucid and melodious verses[7] I feel that he is worthy of bookcase contact with Crashaw. He rouses and kindles faith in the divine endeavour of altruism to realise the dream of flame and glorious light that drowses and pines in people who have no mighty genius to establish their individuality on the rock :

" Fire brings no loss
Save of all dross
And every bond.
Stript, thou shalt show
In fiercest glow
True Diamond ! "

That is the language of a confident Messenger, and when the poet asks us," Were you ever where the flowers spring from ? " " Were you ever where the thrushes learn their music ? " " Did your freed soul ever wander into love's domain," he stings and thrills the torpid idealism of the Mixed Man. It would be certainly silly to read Donne's religious poetry and ignore Mr. Hall's ; it would suggest the snobbery of Fossildom, i.e., Academies.

W. H. CHESSON.

[2] " Songs in Cities and Gardens." By Helen Granville Barker. 5s. net. (Chatto & Windus.)
[3] " The Legend of Roncevaux." Adapted from " La Chanson de Roland." By Susanna H. Uloth. 5s. net. (Fisher Unwin.)
[4] " The Three-Rock Road." By H. L. Doak. 2s. net. (Fisher Unwin.)
[5] " A Muse at Sea." By E. Hilton Young. 2s. 6d. net. (Sidgwick & Jackson.)
[6] " Cometh the Song." By W. G. S. Whiting. 3s. 6d. net. (Erskine Macdonald.)
[7] " The Heart of a Mystic." By W. Robert Hall. 2s. 6d. net. (Elkin Mathews.)

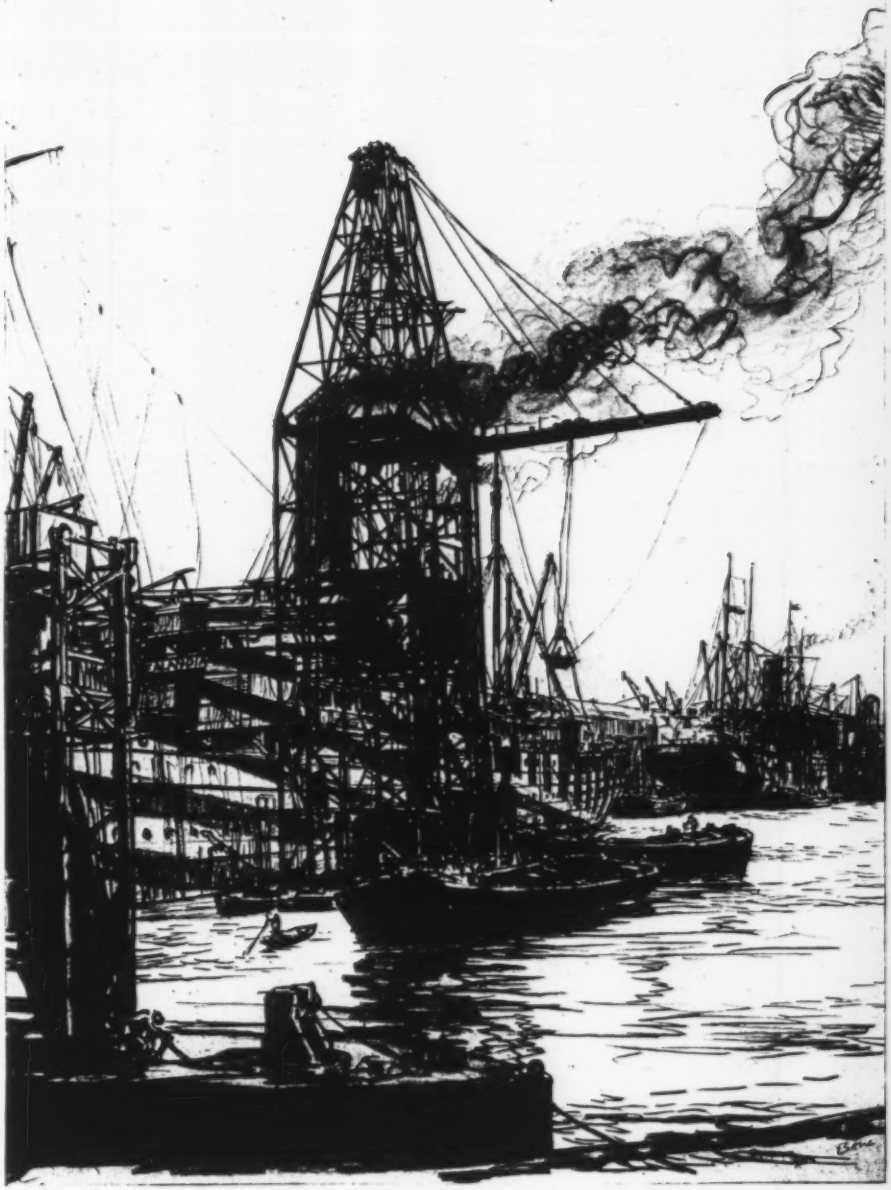
From a painting by John Thomson.
From "Thomson of Duddingston"
By Robert W. Napier, F.R.S.A.
(Oliver & Boyd).

NEWARK CASTLE.

XUM

"LION" LEADING THE BATTLE CRUISERS.

From "More Sea Fights of the Great War"
By W. L. Wylie, R.A.
With explanatory and descriptive text
By C. Owen and W. D. Kirkpatrick.
(Cassell).



From "Merchantmen-at-Arms"
Written by David Bone.
Illustrated by Muirhead Bone
(Chatto & Windus).

GIANT CRANE.

XUM

Photo by G. W. King, New York.

ALEXANDER BLACK,
Author of "The Great Desire
(*Hodder & Stoughton*).

YORKSHIRE FOLK-STUFF.*

A delightful personality, lately lost to English literature and many friends, is represented in the two little volumes published by Mr. Elkin Mathews. Professor Moorman, at Leeds, founded a true folk-cult, and his work will yet be known better than it is. In "Songs of the Ridings" he offered poems that "might be read in the cottage and recited or sung at social gatherings of the people." In "Plays of the Ridings" his aim was "to quicken an interest in dramatic art in Yorkshire, and help in the establishment of folk festivals of song and dance and drama." It is useless to cry "Back to the land," and merely utilitarian to make things easy for farmers, unless there be something also done to make life on the land worth living. That was Fred Moorman's creed of public spirit and common sense. He points out in a preface:

> "The harvest is almost the only prolonged occupation of farm life that provides comradeship for the agricultural labourer; most of his other tasks are plied in solitude. Where shall we find a lonelier figure than the ploughman in his furrow, the shepherd on the roofless moor, or the cowman in his byre draining the udders dry by the feeble light of a stable lantern in the hours that herald in a winter dawn? It is solitude rather than bitter weather or long hours that breeds discontent in the countryman and drives him to the town."

So Moorman spent ten years or more in a roving study of the countryman's mentality and speech in the three Ridings of his adopted county, and in giving him acceptable songs and plays.

In a university man this mission was singular. The conventional aim is to educate the manual worker to appreciate what is best in standard English literature. It sets a taboo on dialect. All very well and fine; but it also ignores the fact that our great poets depict a world which is only to a very small extent that of the manual worker. What does he care, or what can he ever care, for Spenser's purpose "to fashion a gentleman or a noble person in virtuous and gentle discipline," or for Pope's toy "shepherds"? Even the Rev. George Crabb writes in a three-decker pulpit and calls his unpretentious plain house a cot. And Wordsworth—"a desolate-minded man. Many's the time I've seed him takin' his family out in a string": the speaker is an old Cumberland innkeeper, reported by Canon Rawnsley: "and niver giein' the dearest bit o' notice to 'em; standin' by hissel' an' stoppin' behind a-gapin', wi' his jaws workin' the whoal time; niver no crackin' wi' 'em, nor no pleasure in 'em." Our splendid literature, in fact, is esoteric. But look back to the period that scholars deem its darkest, the fifteenth century! Minstrels chanted the terse popular ballads everywhere, and the trade guilds entertained themselves with "miracle plays." The folk song sang from heart to heart. It is plain that, for the people, the Renaissance was as great a loss as for the scholar and courtier it was a gain; and only educated people have shared the scholar's and courtier's inheritance. What is the remedy? Must not song and drama take up the life of the people again, in their own tongue? Who can doubt that Burns and Edwin Waugh and Joseph Skipsey and William Barnes and Moira O'Neill were in the right line?

Moorman argued and worked for Yorkshire in this way, first making a collection of dialect poems from 1673 to 1915 and then, in the two present volumes, supplementing them. He could not sound the highest lyric note, but it is an immediate result of his crusade that others begin to pipe it softly. In these volumes let us be duly thankful for the prefaces, alive with rational and noble feeling. The high lyric note comes less consciously, and I think he would himself have touched it if he had not been quite so full of crusading purpose:

> "It's hard when fowks can't find their work
> Wheer they've been bred an' born;
> When I were young I awlus thowt
> I'd bide 'mong t' roots an' corn.

* "Songs of the Ridings." By F. W. Moorman. 3s. net. (Elkin Mathews.)—"Plays of the Ridings." By F. W. Moorman. 3s. 6d. net. (Elkin Mathews.)—"Leet Livvy." By J. S. Fletcher. 2s. 6d. net. (Sidgwick & Jackson.)

Photo by Elliott & Fry. **The late Professor F. W. Moorman.**

> But I've bin forced to work i' towns,
> So here's my litany:
> Frae Hull, an' Halifax, an' Hell,
> Gooid Lord, deliver me! . . .
>
> "But now, when all wer childer's fligged (fledged),
> To t' coontry we've coom back;
> Ther's fotty mile o' heathery moor
> Twix us an' t' coal-pit slack.
> An' when I sit ower t' fire at neet
> I laugh an' shout wi' glee:
> Frae Bradforth, Leeds an' Huthersfel',
> Frae Hull, an' Halifax, an' Hell,
> T' gooid Lord's delivered me!"

That is not a characteristic sample, for it gives no hint of his tenderness, humour and sense of the romantic, which lift some other pieces to a much higher level and make me wish to quote them; but it shows the force of his arm. And the plays? I could not overpraise their raciness and truth of character; nor can I doubt that one of them, "Potter Thompson," founded on a Richmond legend of King Arthur and his knights, is a masterpiece. In this there is not only great humour in the potters' talk, playing upon events in 1430 with the homeliest shrewdness, but much blank verse of noble import, yet all within the true scope of a folk drama; so that one predicts for it a lasting popularity in the shire of broad acres and a wider fame. "The Ewe Lamb," too, a farce based upon the nativity scene in the Wakefield mystery plays, is immensely diverting, and should serve as a model; for it was meant not to refurbish antiquarian fun, but to show how, in country places where there are no stage properties, fun may be made of life as men know it daily. Thus the author practised as well as preached a "return to the folk"; and his last word about it was this, which will not be disputed: "Modern democracy cannot do without art and poetry, nor can art and poetry do without democracy."

"Leet Livvy," Mr. J. S. Fletcher's narrative poem, was privately printed and is now with brighter prospects given publicity. It is the most important thing of the kind that has appeared in this "vernacular," which is no longer properly to be called such, but stands confessed as the true parent stock. For dramatic monologue Moorman says he went to Browning; Mr. Fletcher seems to have gone to Tennyson. In a measure and manner recalling "The

Northern Farmer" he has told a poignant tale, a love tragedy with unexpected turns and the right grim ending, and put it in the mouth of the village sexton, very fitly. Yet I mislike the spelling. It is teased with meticulous phonetics, in Tennyson's way. No one attempts that treatment of Scotch, and it does not help the reader.

KEIGHLEY SNOWDEN.

FIVE IN HAND.*

The writer of the stories "The Second Wife" and "His Family" is a man who dreams fair dreams and puts them into his books. Some time ago Mr. H. G. Wells in writing "The Undying Fire" set forth the thoughts which lie behind the fantasies which we know as novels, the thoughts which perhaps all novelists have—the new silk which waits to be woven into their prayer rugs! We feel without any doubt that from such thoughts came "The Second Wife," and the character of Roger Gale in "His Family."

Mr. Poole is an agreeable and earnest writer. "The Second Wife" is a study of a young girl who, on marrying her late sister's husband, decides to exchange that sister's pleasure-loving and worldly set for one of greater intelligence. As the poor child has no particular gift—is indeed a homely, domestic little person—she finds this difficult of accomplishment, and you are left feeling that even if she seems to realise her ambition she can never, in the way of intimacy, get beyond the outer rooms.

"His Family," a more mellow book, is the story of a middle-aged widower and his three daughters. The lives of these young women develop in accordance with their characters, the book ending with the death of the father. The book is pleasantly written, but unfortunately it lacks the element of surprise. You read on, knowing what will happen, and for many people that means that they do not read on.

"The Taming of Nan" opens with a fine piece of psychology in the person of the shrew whose irritation could be worked off only by physical mastery and who, if beaten whenever the tides of temper rose, would have been a happy, perhaps even an amiable, woman. The description of the fight between Nan and Will Cherry is excellent; indeed the whole story is written with a passion which ever and anon crystallises into a compelling beauty of phrase. Miss Holdsworth's craftmanship has improved since she wrote "Helen of Four Gates," but she still—like most beginners—finds it difficult to realise that action should result from character, and also that character must develop on the lines natural to it. That Nan, the hooligan, the irreconcilable Stone Age woman, hopelessly slatternly and dirty, should after twenty years' matrimony have turned into a house-angel is impossible to believe. As to her sentimental feeling for little Rob after she has let her own five sons die of neglect, a neglect for which she has never known regret or sorrow, this is a Nan grown senile and absurd. One word more. Whereas the book opened with Nan as the central figure, about half-way through the interest shifts from Nan to Polly. The fact is that, in spite of its warmth, strength and beauty, the story is a little disappointing, for it lacks the slow concentrated building up which results in drama. More, a great deal more, might have been made of Nan and of her relations with Cherry, while Polly should have been kept in the background and used only to heighten the drama of her elders' lives.

The cover of "A Pair of Idols" raises a hope of eastern warmth and magic which is doomed to disappointment; but the author makes up for the sins of his publisher by plunging us at once into a world of happy-go-lucky adventure. Though the story contains, as a sort of core, the two Burmese idols of the wrapper, the scene is laid in Ireland, and the book was written by a man in such high spirits that we feel he ought to pay for the pleasure it evidently gave him by presenting a copy free, gratis, to all his laughter-loving friends. It is a bit of effervescence, a bubble jolly and prismatic, this tale of the irresponsible actions of cheerful Irish folk—the sort who, no doubt, would like to escape from the humdrum common-sense government of the humourless Briton, into Home Rule. A joyous little book!

The casualness which can add an unnecessary preface and also a foreword to an already long-winded story ("The Restless Sex") is perhaps evidence of the writer's indifference to opinion. A little care and both could have been suggested by the story, but care is trouble and it is easier to go ahead and not bother.

A certain John Cleland adopts a waif who, in spite of being the child of decadent vicious parents, proves altogether good and beautiful. She gives the greatest possible satisfaction to this worthy man who, the stage being set for a love affair between the waif and his only son, is swept off it by death. The son, Jim, in accordance with his father's wishes, goes abroad, and while he is away Stephanie marries—platonically, be it understood. In due time, however, her husband commits suicide. Why should this story—Mr. Chambers's forty-ninth novel—which is frankly unreal and sentimental, hold the reader's attention? Possibly by its very unreality, for "The Restless Sex" is a fairy story of the good, old-fashioned kind, with Godmother Cleland opposed to Wicked Fairy Grismer, and Jim to play Prince Charming to a lovely Cinderella. And yet one wonders whether Mr. Chambers is content with the book, whether he would not like to flush these time-worn channels with the sweet waters of actuality, and, instead of pretty-pretty sentiment, write a story of life.

C. A. DAWSON-SCOTT.

* "The Second Wife." By Ernest Poole. 3s. (Macmillan.)—"His Family." By Ernest Poole. 3s. (Macmillan.)—"The Taming of Nan." By E. Holdsworth. 6s. (Herbert Jenkins.)—"A Pair of Idols." By Stewart Caven. 7s. (Chapman & Hall.)—"The Restless Sex." By R. W. Chambers. 6s. 6d. (Appleton.)

LAST FRUIT OFF THE TREE.*

The publication, last year, of "Literary Recreations," and, within the past few weeks, of "More Literary Recreations," has fittingly rounded off the life's work of a man full in the sense of Bacon's aphorism, and a gifted and ready writer.

The Preface to the earlier volume modestly expressed a hope that the book would communicate to the reader somewhat of the pleasure taken by the writer in making it, and ended by echoing Dr. Horton's pious wish (*vide* his Autobiography) for the resumption in a Future World of the gatherings of the New College Essay Society in their far-off youth. Turning the pages of the volume now before us, we remember the allusion, and seem to see in it a half-conscious previsioning of the journey's end. The fruit of a wide and liberal scholarship, unspoiled by any touch of pedantry, the book is instinct with the wisdom begotten of experience and reflection. There is wit in it without cynicism, and that quality of ease combined with strength in the writing of it which comes of fullness of knowledge. In short it is a mellow book. A true citizen of the world, the author ranges at will from Homer to Sir William Watson, and from "Bootle's Baby" to John Burns. Always mentally alert and receptive, he remained to the end catholic in his intellectual tastes and sympathies, as, physically, he was much and distantly travelled. This is one of those books—distressingly few when one thinks of it—which the wise critic is content to enjoy and does not criticise.

Sir Edward Cook's title to fame is clear as he himself could wish—not that he ever expressed a wish on the subject that we are aware of. He was a great editor—both as Fleet Street understands the term and as it was understood by the producer of the noble library edition

* "More Literary Recreations." By Sir Edward Cook. 7s. 6d. net. (Macmillan.)

of Ruskin, and his essay here on "The Art of Editing" is made luminous for us in the light of that memorable achievement. An essay that would have been valuable in any case as precept, is not the less valuable in that it follows on example—and it is, and must always remain, the peculiar distinction of Sir Edward that he was a preceptor who was also an exemplar and a master of a high and honourable craft.

In "Travelling Companions" the essayist reconsiders the perennially interesting theme of books one would choose as companions during a solitude enforced or a sojourn in strange places. The expectant reader will not be defrauded of his reference to Sir John Lubbock—who assured Sir Edward that he really had read the whole of his hundred best books. "Scepticism vanished when I remembered where he lived. Even the Mahabharata might relieve the tedium of waiting on the South-Eastern and Chatham Railway." A sentence like that, occurring on the third page of his book, puts some of us at once *en rapport* with the author! (Sir Percy Scott, in *his* recent book, tells us that the battleship is dead, and, casting about him for the means of rendering his argument unanswerable, likens the speed of a battleship to that of a South-Eastern Railway train, naïvely adding, "I am told that this is the slowest line on earth." We are convinced —the battleship is undoubtedly dead.)

In "The Classics in Daily Life" Sir Edward does in some sort for "profane" what Prothero did for "sacred" writ in "The Psalms in Human Life." "A Short Study in Words" is eloquent of the vicissitudes which fall to the lot of words, as of men, in peace as in war; and in "Single-Poem Poets" the reader is set speculating once again on the mystery of Blanco White and his sonnet, on Charles Wolfe, on the unknown author of the "Canadian Boat Song," and other similarly unlucky suitors of a tricksy muse. A wholly delightful "Ramble in Pliny's Letters" had for the moment all but cancelled for us the intervening centuries. There is a paper on "Poets as Critics," which, incidentally, revived our one-time eager curiosity on the subject of that tragedy of "Lucretius" on which Matthew Arnold worked for more than twenty years. The appearance, in 1868, of Tennyson's poem on the same subject, upset Arnold's plans, and his own work has never been given to the world, though in his "New Poems," published in 1867, he had prefixed to "Thyrsis" the following lines:

> "Thus yesterday, to-day, to-morrow come,
> They hustle one another and they pass;
> But all our hustling morrows only make
> The smooth to-day of God."
> From "Lucretius," an unpublished Tragedy.

The paper on "The Charm of the Greek Anthology," with its appended list of translations of the Anthology into English, is fragrant with old familiar perfume from that middle garden of Parnassus. It is plain that the Anthology held its own peculiar place in Sir Edward's regard, and he combats with as keen a gusto as he (who is never "gusty") anywhere permits himself, the adverse opinion expressed by Sir John Mahaffy, to say nothing of Chesterfield's lordly relegation of the Greek Epigrams to his son's supreme contempt. By the way, what a limbo *that* was!

Omitting the classical allusions, the author most frequently mentioned in a book which owes somewhat of its appeal to a frank and spontaneous allusiveness is Ruskin, as was to be expected, though Shelley and Shakespeare run him hard, and Milton, Wordsworth, Matthew Arnold, Browning, Swinburne and Tennyson are never very far away.

In an earlier essay, on "The Art of Indexing," Sir Edward said there are two classes of books that should always have a good index—the best books and the most unreadable books. "The best books, because there is so much in them that a reader will want to find again; the worst books, because, lacking an index, they are without any reason for existing at all." For the first of these reasons we are pleased to find this present book provided with an index so excellent that in some instances it serves the purpose of foot-notes in its disclosures of names and references not stated in the text.

F. C. OWLETT.

Novel Notes.

SPADE WORK. By Mrs. Henry Dudeney. 6s. 9d. net. (Hurst & Blackett.)

A young musician and two women are the protagonists of Mrs. Dudeney's new novel. Enoch Brown, youthful, unpractical, a true artist, affectionate and attaching, lives in the same house with Caroline Beech and her mother. Caroline is vivid, keen, direct and practical, as well as discerning, and while loving Enoch adoringly has no illusions as to his ever becoming anything of great note in the world. Strong affection unites the three in their poverty in the quaint little house behind Westminster Abbey, where Caroline worked hard at leather work and beads and silver trinkets, Enoch with dull music pupils and Mrs. Beech cooking and cleaning. Suddenly Mrs. Beech has a legacy of thirty thousand pounds and an enchanting house in Angmering, and away we go to Mrs. Dudeney's beloved Sussex. Here the joys of comfort and luxury cause Caroline and Mrs. Beech to blossom and revel, but Enoch sets his face against marriage till he has made his name and a position. At Angmering is Juniper Sadgrove who lives alone with an aged grandmother, and Enoch drifts to her while still imagining he will marry Caroline. The developing of Caroline from the simple, ardent girl of North Street to the strong, competent, aloof, wise woman who sees her lover lost yet never grows sour, but helps her rival in her worst need and arranges that she shall marry Enoch, is excellently and delicately drawn. There is not the slightest doubt that Mrs. Dudeney really excels in her portraits of women, especially women with heart and brain and character. Caroline and Juniper are both fine creations, and the disentangling of the tangle holds our attention and our sympathy and engages our profound interest. The minor characters are so clearly drawn and so distinct and interesting that they are only minor in the sense of being secondary to the theme—they are quite essential and without them the whole story would be altered. The book is full of wise psychology, keen observation and swift, penetrating, true ideas, and is in many ways an exceedingly fine novel. Its essentially minor key—the minor key of the ensemble rather than of the details—will prove no aid to winning it the popularity it deserves. One thing is very noteworthy, and it is surely hardly in the best manner. The characters are strongly sketched in, Caroline sprightly, vivacious, physically restless, her mother large, "blowsy," golden-eyed, placid, Juniper, also, still outwardly, fire within. But at no point can Mrs. Dudeney allow them to do anything other than restlessly, or blowsily or with fiery stillness. This insistence amounts to harping or almost nagging, and astonishes one in a book that otherwise is written with really exquisite art and understanding.

THE DOMINANT RACE. By F. E. Mills Young. 7s. net. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

Another story of an African farm, where a young English girl finds herself governess to a Boer family. There are two threads in the strand of the romance. One is the tragic clash of the European and the coloured races. "We despise the coloured races, and they know it," says the hero, who is by no means a bully. "They fear us; in a sense they look up to us as the dominant race; but that sort of feeling doesn't breed affection. It requires endless tact to administer a country like this; and we aren't always tactful. We recognise readily the disqualification of the coloured man; but we do not always or readily

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admit his right to protection, his right to the inviolate sanctity of his national ideals." But the story is much more than a study of this problem. Penelope Lovemore is an attractive young person, and it is her wooing, by two men, which makes the romance of the novel. Her successful lover starts badly handicapped by a previous marriage, but he rescues her from outrage at the hands of a native, and the handicap is removed somewhat drastically at the close. The book is, like its predecessors from the same pen, charged with a strong emotional interest, and enriched with some admirable descriptions of South African scenery and life. Twice at least the story is dramatically sharp. It has its moments of keen action, but these are adroitly relieved by a background of more conventional details, which are never allowed to be conventional in the sense of being dull.

THE BOOMING OF BUNKIE. By A. S. Neill. 6s. net. (Jenkins.)

Those who wish to read a thoroughly amusing and farcical story by the author of " A Dominie's Log " should not miss this book. It is absurd and impossible but certainly funny; and a good laugh—even a continual giggle—is a tonic to the soul. The hero is Peter MacMunn, who enters Bunkie on a motor cycle over the body of a dog. As there is no motor shop in the town he cannot get away again; then he sees Evelyn Kerbet and has an idea. That is to boom the sleepy, do-nothing place into a popular seaside resort, and incidentally to remain near the girl who snubs him so coolly and so cruelly. It is a new rendering of the story of the seemingly unattainable princess, only the adventures are performed by a knight of the pen and not of the sword. Peter writes the advertisements, which boom Bunkie, with his tongue in his cheek and so brings upon himself many a conflict. He also has cinema, golf links, pavilion, band, etc., established as by magic, and in accomplishing his aim has to defend himself against the rivals whom he ridicules. The book is full of broad humour and offers a pleasant way of spending a few hours.

THE SCENT SHOP. By Peggy Webling. 6s. 9d. net. (Hutchinson.)

Quaint and little known by-ways and backwaters of life in London seem to have a peculiar fascination for Miss Peggy Webling, and she has the art of getting the feel, the colour, the atmosphere of such life into her books and communicating the fascination of it to her readers. In her new novel, the ancient science and mystery of scent making, as practised in modern London, makes a background and environment for a varied and interesting set of characters and a love story that looks as if it were shaping for disaster, but remains unmarred and fragrant to the end. When Arthur Lackland first enters The Rosarium, a small shop in a cobbled street at Hammersmith, and is invited into the back parlour to wait till a heavy storm is over, he makes acquaintance with Ishmael Surrey, the scent-maker, his old, witch-like grandmother and the charming young Eulalia whom he takes to be Surrey's daughter, and, touched by the charm of her, learns with dismay before he goes, that she is Ishmael's wife. He is drawn to profit by a general invitation, and become a visitor at the shop; the more so because from Eulalia's subdued, undemonstrative manner, he cannot believe she has any love for the husband so much older than herself. Some dramatic surprises result from the revelation of Ishmael's illicit relationship to the Lackland family, but the chief interest of the story gathers about the scent shop and the unfolding of Eulalia's deep love of the man she had married. The characters, from the three little orphans Ishmael has adopted to Lackland's butterfly, widowed sister and her friends, are drawn admirably, with sympathy and with humour; and the book is one to be read with pleasure both for the tale it tells and the skill and charm of the telling.

IF ALL THESE YOUNG MEN. By Romer Wilson. 7s. net. (Methuen.)

The title is from a song sung by a youth to one of the girls in the book:

> " If all these young men were like hares upon the mountains,
> Then all these pretty maidens would soon follow after."

But the young men are not worth following; they are a poor, shifting crew, and their relations with the girls are ambiguous. The author has chosen as her period the time of strain and tension in England during the spring of 1918, but the only character who seems to feel the reality of the situation is Josephine Miller. It is difficult to sympathise with any of the characters—none is heroic in any sense of the term; and it is still more difficult to see what the author is driving at. There is cleverness in the book, but it has no plot, and it ends as inconsequently as the youths and girls act throughout its pages. People who talk and analyse their emotions during a time of national peril are not exhilarating company in life or in a novel. Miss Wilson should try to find better material for her powers.

HEARTS OF WOMEN: A Study of a Group. By Morley Roberts. 7s. net. (Eveleigh Nash.)

This is a study of a group of modern women and the reactions of their different minds under the present marriage system. There are five of them: Deb, the apostle of the conventions; Hilary, the tolerant and kind, adapting herself to convention yet losing none of her sympathy for the outcasts; Beatrice, the unhappy vacillator who, lonely and miserable inside the pale, yet cannot make up her mind to step outside it; the weak and, it must be said, rather unconvincingly drawn Ann, who finds only one road out of an unhappy bondage that does not end in a blind alley; and the untrammelled Theo, who less defies convention than ignores it, and is the only truly happy woman of the five. The workmanship of this book is both strong and delicate. It is written with sureness and restraint. Yet strangely it lacks poignancy. This is perhaps because the reader, though held and interested all through, is all the time aware that these five women, though in no sense mere types, have been carefully chosen and correlated by the author in order to put forward his " case " in the clearest possible manner. Of course, every artist must, and does, do this. But it is a pity when it becomes apparent in the finished work. This is, we think, why Mr. Morley Roberts's book lacks what can only be called the " universality " of a great work of art. The case, we feel, is the thing; these unhappy women the exponents of it. The book might have been written so that the " case " should not have occurred to us until the poignancy of their unhappiness had touched our hearts. This is not to say that Beatrice, Hilary and the rest are lay figures. They are not. Nevertheless, the men of the story, the philosophical Frank, the commonplace George, and even the brutal John, are more natural and convincing than any of the women; perhaps because we are allowed to see their minds, instead of only their hearts. It is strange that in all this story of passionate and tortured hearts, of hateful bondage only ended by tragic death, Mr. Morley Roberts never so nearly touches the fount of tears as in that half-page where he describes the reception by the cross-grained and self-absorbed John Fuller of the news of his wife's suicide. It is only a hundred words or so, chiefly of dialogue, but it is written with a brevity and simplicity that goes straight to the heart, and reveals the author as the true artist as well as the skilful and ardent advocate.

THE INSCRUTABLE LOVERS. By Alexander Macfarlane. 7s. net. (Heinemann.)

" The Inscrutable Lovers " is a tragi-comedy of young love written by an author who seems to be a Catholic priest. The result of this clerical authorship is that the story is constructed in the later Conrad manner—the manner of " Chance " and of " Under Western Eyes." It is built up, that is to say, on narratives, surmises, confessions, hints,

and never told quite directly; and this method of revelation by flashes and glimpses is after all exceedingly well suited to a tale in which hero and heroine come together by a mutual misunderstanding. Margaret Kettle is the daughter of Count Kettle, a Sinn Feiner, an incorrigible dreamer and romantic. Therefore, though she loathes adventure and idealism, she is regarded by everybody as devoted to such loyalties. Charles Macaig, whom she marries almost immediately after her first interview with him, is the son of a stern practical Glasgow shipowner, who is a Carsonite. But he too has all his life revolted against the paternal creed and outlook and secretly has a passion for romance and a leaning towards the Catholic Church. How this pair of star-crossed lovers, who after all are eminently likely to complement one another, meet, marry and react against their mistaken notions of one another, Mr. Macfarlane tells with rare subtlety, humour and reticence. But what imp of perversity led him to commit the incredible *bêtise* of naming his papal count Count Kettle? What will the Kettles (and the Plunketts) think of such a christening?

THE DESPERATE MARRIAGE. By Marjory Royce. 6s. net. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

The strongest situation in "The Desperate Marriage" comes at about the middle of the book, on Violet Hedley's wedding morning. Serving as a nursery governess, Violet had grown deeply attached to her charge, little Primrose, and, without knowing it, had fallen in love with her employer, Jim Hackworth, a wealthy barrister whose callous, pleasure-loving wife had married him only for his money. A common affection for the child, whom its mother neglected, had drawn Violet and Jim together, and her pity for the slighted, unhappy husband had ripened into love, which he returned, though nothing of this was spoken of between them. Headley goes abroad on business, having arranged that Violet shall remain in charge of the child and write to him of her welfare; but he is no sooner gone than Mrs. Hackworth, partly from jealousy, partly to have the ground clear for carrying on a love affair of her own, discharges her. Feeling she has failed Jim and can be of no service to him; that it might be wiser for both if she could forget him; she is, after a while, hurried in a weak moment into engaging herself to Captain Vernon, home on leave from the front, and then into as hurried a marriage before he goes back. And on her wedding morning comes a telegram from Jim that his wife is dead and asking her to go to Primrose and stay there till he returns. It was possible at that eleventh hour to defy convention, run away, avoid the wedding and let the scandalmongers talk, but Violet had no strength for that, and bewildered and heart-broken carries out her compact and becomes the wife of a good fellow whom she does not love. With what results it is for the book to tell. The story is well planned and crisply and clearly written; a thoroughly interesting story, with plenty of sparkle in the dialogue and some shrewd sketches of character.

THE BLUE CLOAK. By Halliwell Sutcliffe. 6s. (Ward, Lock.)

A charming and interesting tale of the days when the third George was still anxiously baffling Jacobite plots. An undercurrent of Stuart hopes and fears runs through the story, but for the most part it deals with the constantly interrupted flight of a young couple to Gretna Green. This slip-between-the-cup-and-the-lip journey is skilfully described, and although the famous blacksmith does not unite the lovers, yet in the end they come to the altar in a more orthodox way. Lastingham and Miss Trevor are delightful run-aways, and well deserve the fate which their creator allots to them when the tale ends. But, indeed, all the characters are good. Lord Trevor, the Rider Sinclair, Mr. Lambert, Janet the Witch, even Ned and Nora have all individual characters carefully delineated, so that they become very real to the reader. But the true hero of the book, the man who holds the reader's attention and gradually engages his sympathy, is Sir Richard Swayne. He is an admirable study of a wastrel who finds himself, and Mr. Sutcliffe has reached the high-water mark of understanding in describing the struggle which goes on between the good and the bad. The author's optimism is shown in the triumph of Swayne's better qualities, and when the clear flame of the soul rises through the black reek of selfishness, we learn to love and respect the man. He begins as a villain and ends, if not as a saint, at all events as a man who has fought the good fight and has won. The Blue Cloak, which gives its name to the story, acts as a kind of perverse imp, inanimate though it be, and constantly gets the lovers into unexpected trouble. Mr. Sutcliffe has never done better work than in this clean, wholesome and very human story through which there blows the keen moorland airs, and through which there runs also the haunting refrain of the old Jacobite song, which steels so many noble gentlemen to fight for a lost cause.

The Bookman's Table.

ANTHENIAN DAYS. By F. Noel Byron. (Elkin Mathews.)

Mr. Byron's slender volume manifests an intense love of the beautiful and deep reverence for the Spirit of Greece, to which he dedicates his opening poem:

> "I have pursued you through the olive groves,
> And watched your shimmering shoulders part
> The Paphian vine leaves . . ."

He writes with a true sense of the value of words, and lovers of poetry will find much in his book to read and re-read with enjoyment. It is difficult to select one poem for quoting where the general level of quality is so well maintained, but perhaps "Troy" presents a fair example of Mr. Byron's gift:

(2000 B.C.)

> "The Greek ships quiver off the shores of Troy
> When day's last breath makes music in the sails.
> Beneath the bloody fingers of the West
> The warriors furbish up their shining blades.
> The camp-fires wink and beckon to the night,
> And trumpets cry the passing of the day."

(A.D. 1915.)

> "A thousand hammers beating on the rocks
> Send Echo screaming to the Trojan lines.
> There is no rest; the Sun bows down his head
> Upon a land that Furies' flails have scourged."

Photo by W. S. Stuart, Richmond. **Mr. F. Noel Byron.**

AN IRISH HEART. By David McKee Wright. (Sydney: Angus & Robertson.)

This volume comes to us from Australia and, judging by his name, the poet would be a man of the North, that is to say—the North of Ireland. He has a very pleasant gift of writing; a sense of the lyric, clear, simple vocabulary, a great love of colour, which he is able to get into his verse, and an unbounded joy in making his poems which he has the art to impart to the reader. He has some delightful ballads. I wish I could quote "The Beggar's Bowl," but since that may not be, I take a verse or two from a less representative poem to show Mr. Wright's quality. The name of the poem is "Haunted Memory":

"I will go on to the sunrise, taking the road as it winds
Beyond three trees and a broken gate and a house that cannot see
Because the windows are shuttered over the ragged blinds,
And there is none within it to open the door to me.

"But there is a hedge in blossom and a scent of honey blown
Always out of the garden if one should loiter and pass—
And it seems like a place that sometime at evening I must have known
Walking with shining feet when the dew was wet in the grass."

Mr. Wright has kept the wistful melancholy of his Irish inheritance. There is nothing Australian about this pleasant book, except the flamboyant reviews printed on the cover.

MEMOIR OF KENELM HENRY DIGBY. By Bernard Holland, C.B. 10s. 6d. net. (Longmans.)

For most of the present generation, it is probable, "The Broad Stone of Honour" and "Mores Catholici" are vague titles in literature, while such lesser memorials as "Evenings on the Thames," not to speak of obscure poems like "The Chapel of St. John," are among utterly forgotten records. There are few in any case who can take them down from their bookshelves and read them as they ought to be read in casual and undesigned places, acquiring so much of their spirit as the star of books dispenses at the given moment. Such persons—if otherwise prepared—do not fail of their reward, for Digby was a man of election at his period, and for men and women of election his writings are meant now. Convert though he was, he seems to me, at his best, a Catholic in the best sense of the Latin Rite, which is not the sense of his "Compitum," or of a few polemical passages in other volumes, but that of the "Morte d'Arthur" and the "Quest of the Holy Grail." I should think that he was nourished in his youth on these sacred romances and that they were a light upon land and sea for all his life of vision. His memorial of chivalry, "The Broad Stone of Honour," is Nuno Alvarez Pereira and his prototype, Galahad, emblazoned in a strange frame of literature. It lifts up that which it purports to be, the history of chivalry, into a chronicle of spiritual knighthood, and in proportion as its subject is idealised it becomes like the "Book of the Grail" itself, a story told for one of "the truest and holiest" that are in this world. Digby died in 1880, and this memoir seems late in the day, but it is good to know something about him on the personal side and not be disappointed in the story. I do not think that we are brought to him in any nearer sense, but the work has been done with great sympathy and evidently as a work of love, though a little over-militant on the Roman side. I am sure that Kenelm Digby, like his perhaps more famous kinsman in the seventeenth century, can be called "a complete chevalier." Both of them were Christian gentlemen, and if it be true that people of the world beyond return occasionally here for another experiment in flesh, they remind us so much of each other that we could almost think the author of "Mores Catholici" had written farther back in his history some books of strange learning and quaint devices which pass under the earlier name. Still it is a dream only, for it is not to be supposed that he of the "Broadstone" can be identified in any incarnation with "The Closet of Sir Kenelm Digby," though it is the most catholic of all cookery-books.

THE DEVONSHIRE CLUB AND CROCKFORD'S. By H. T. Waddy. 10s. 6d. net. (Eveleigh Nash.)

It is almost terrible to think that such a haunt of highly respectable Liberals as the Devonshire Club stands on the site of Crockford's, where, in the good old times, men gambled away fortunes in a single night. Mr. Waddy, who says with some humour that he has become impervious to criticism since his election to the Club committee, here tells the story of both houses in a narrative so brief, interesting and informative, that he has no need to fear the keenest darts of those who thrive upon the calamities of authors and the curiosities of literature. Such is the constitution of human nature that the iniquities of Crockford's will generally be pronounced more interesting than the vicissitudes of the Devonshire. One noble lord lost £3,400 on a single game at whist by forgetting that the seven of hearts was in. The same incorrigible gentleman afterwards lost £23,000 at a single sitting lasting a day. The expenditure of the club upon dice alone was £2,000 a year. Naturally Crockford's, as a resort of the "higher" classes, escaped prosecution as a common gaming-house. It is comforting to know that England is always so true to its great traditions.

THE SPLENDID DAYS. By May Wedderburn Cannan. (Oxford: Blackwell.)

If you have read Miss Cannan's earlier book of verse, "In War Time," you will know that she has imagination, a gift of clothing ordinary things with the magic of poetry, but none of her other songs are so poignant, so charged with feeling and emotion as are some in this new volume. You gather from them that she was on war work in Paris, and if you felt the thankfulness and sense of heartbreak that came upon most of us at the first news of the Armistice you will recognise the simple pathos and vivid realness of such a poem as "In an Office, in Paris," and scarcely be able to read it unmoved: just the eager, broken chatter of the girls of what this ending of the war meant to them. . . .

"The other said, 'Thank God, we saw it through;
I wonder what they'll do at home to-day.'
And said, 'You know it will be quiet to-night
Up at the Front; first time in all these years,
And no one will be killed there any more,'
And stopped to hide her tears.
She said, 'I've told you; he was killed in June.'"

There is that shadow of the war, that sorrow of love and loss in "Young Adventure":

"I know why I've grown old: it is because you died
Splendidly young: and when you went away
My youth went with you. . . ."

and in most of the poems in the first half of the book; the second half is full of the happiness of better days before death had put an end to all. The very poetry of sorrow is in these verses, but there is so much of strength and courage in them too, and such beauty of thought and feeling that they touch and uplift more than they sadden one.

IRELAND IN FICTION. By S. J. Brown, S.J. 10s. 6d. net. (Maunsel.)

This book of Father Brown's has evidently been a labour of love; and it has all the personal interest and individual charm which are apt to mark the work of a man of strong prejudices. His aim is to give a complete catalogue of novels, romances and books on fairy and folk-lore which have an Irish setting; he does not aim at an index of Irish authors—Goldsmith, Shaw and Wilde do not appear, and their absence makes one wish that, in subsequent editions, Father Brown would enlarge the book to cover published plays. So far as we have tested it, his work is well done. His descriptions of the novels he catalogues is plain and straightforward. There is a valuable appendix dealing with Irish magazines, defunct and existing, and another giving an account of the chief Irish publishers and a series of Irish books. No student of Celtic literature can afford to be without this volume.